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STATION

...the most adventurous PlayStation magazine in the world!

THIS MONTH'S DEMOS:
PREMIER MANAGER '99 • VIVA FOOTBALL
WARZONE 2100 • RIVAL SCHOOLS • MOTORHEAD
LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

PLAYED AT LAST!

FINAL FANTASY VIII

We brave the queues to bring you the first playtest of Square's epic quest

DRIVER
EHRGEIZ
RAINBOW SIX
CARMAGEDDON
BLOODY ROAR 2
RC STUNT COPTER
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LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

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RAPIDE
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Mar 1999
Volume 1 Issue 6

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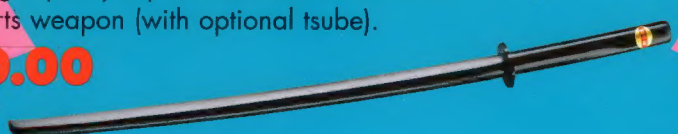

Lesson one: kick the living daylights out of the other guy before he kicks it out of you. **ボクシング・グローブ**

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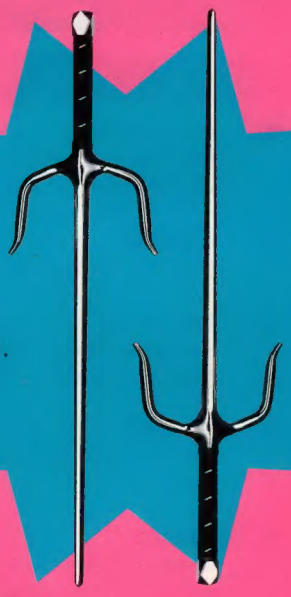

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Fail, and you might be off games for a while. 短刀斧 ヌンチャク

RIVAL SCHOOLS UNITED BY FATE

PlayStation

Take a look at what WE got!

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PLAYED AND RATED

58 METAL GEAR SOLID
A bona-fide work of art, but did you know Solid Snake's first name is Dave?

64 ELIMINATOR
A bit like a walking pace *WipEout*.

65 RALLY CROSS 2
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66 LIVE WIRE!
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67 POY POY 2
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68 LOST WORLD
Majestic prehistoric creatures get blown away.

68 TOTAL DRIVIN'
Or a decaffeinated *GT* if you prefer.

69 PRO PINBALL
Are you a deaf dumb blind kid? Then look no further.

69 RESIDENT EVIL 2 (DUAL SHOCK)
Now Dual Shock compatible! A cash in? Oh yes.

70 TWISTED METAL 3
Guns and cars, and maybe a couple of girls.

72 AFRICA RALLY
Also superior to *Tommi Mäkinen*.

73 STREET FIGHTER ZERO 3
Another very slight new variation of the long-running fighting game.

74 EHRGEIZ
Pretty as a picture action-packed imported beat 'em-up with Cloud in it.

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80 BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY
Why don't you just try harder, you wimps? Cheats and tips for weak-minded fools.

82 TOMB RAIDER III GUIDE (PART 2)
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Putting Lois and Clark to shame, with more scoops than a tub of Haagen-Däz.

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In lieu of this inevitably enormous game's release Dicky 'The Shadow' Melville walks us through the long history of the popular role-playing series.

100 IT'S IN THE GENRES
The 3D Arcade Adventure comes under scrutiny from our team of dedicated professionals this month.

110 LE MANS 24 HOURS
One of the oldest motor races in the world is getting the videogame treatment thanks to Infogrames. We enlighten you on the history of the grueling day-long event, and how the game is shaping up.

10 *Final Fantasy VIII*

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Codemasters are revamping their *TOCA Touring Cars* graphics engine, and giving it a two wheel spin.

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Motorised motorcycle muckiness, as dished up by some cuddly Norwegians.

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It's based on a Tom Clancy novel, but don't let that deter you.

26 **BLOODY ROAR 2**
Rather impressive follow-up to the archetypal animal lovers' fighting game.

28 **LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER**
Dimension-shifting soul sucker with wings. A bit like an undead Gex.

30 **POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING**
Now you can become God without the aid of strong hallucinogenics.

32 **YO YO'S PARK**
Akin to a hybrid of *Bomberman* and *Bubble Bobble*, apparently.

36 **RC STUNT COPTER**
Inspired and, in all likelihood, potentially classic tiny chopper game.

40 **TANK RACER**
Racing tanks? How deliciously anti-social.

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Command & Conquer-esque strategic initiative.

44 **DRIVER**
A bit like *GTA* in proper 3D. *Bullit* meets the *French Connection* on the PSX.

46 **CARMAGEDDON**
Running down innocent pedestrians is now no longer the sole domain of little old ladies.

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That rarest of oddities: a PlayStation flight sim. There's bogies all over me!

49 **FA SOCCER MANAGER**
Duelling stats in a footie context. Again.

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A nineties update of *Spy Vs Spy*, kind of.

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Like a savage beast Dave Perry tears to shreds the BS that's rife in this industry.

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Rip-offs, unwarranted successes, unmissable bargains.

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Beware The Ides Of March!

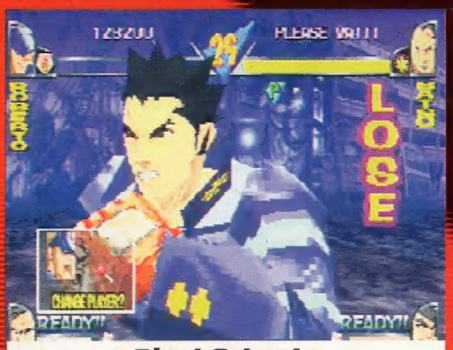
STATION 6

IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE ANOTHER PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE offering a cover disc, that is. Just cast your eye over this page and see what makes STATION stand out from the crowd. We begin with *Viva Football*, presenting you a Stalin-esque approach to the football history books, while you can compare Gremlin's *Premier Manager '99* to last month's demo of *Player Manager*! Then, fight or drive under the nuclear skies of the future with next generation wargaming in *Warzone 2100* and race track thrills in *Motorhead*. Rounding off is *Rival Schools*, a beat 'em-up with a different twist, now the hysteria surrounding *Tekken 3* has finally quieted down, and a rolling look at *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver*.

Premier Manager '99

Viva Football

Warzone 2100



Rival Schools

Motorhead

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

DISC BREAKDOWN

Premier Manager '99

The war of the management sim continues, and this month you get to try out Gremlin's latest contribution to the genre. In this exclusive playable demo we're taking you overseas to the continent, where you can choose from any Italian team and play up to 12 matches including: pre-season friendlies, round one of both the Anglo-Italian and Euro Super Cup competitions and up to six games from the domestic league.

Viva Football

Kids in the playground. Old blokes down the pub. Pundits in the studio. Just who was the best player of all time they ask? The arguments rage on but here at last is a chance to take control of all the candidates. Viva Football brings you all the world greats in 1035 different teams to try and settle the argument once and for all. STATION are giving you the chance to play out the hypothetical meeting of Pele's 1970 Brazil team and Diego 'Hand of God' Maradona's 1986 Argetina. It's a one or two player clash that will last three and a half minutes.

Warzone 2100

The next generation of strategy sims is upon us, and blends the usual careful planning and deployment of troops and resources with a front line, fully 3D viewpoint. Play through the tutorial and first two levels of this post-apocalyptic wargame, and take the seat of command in an army of survivors attempting to reconstruct society.

Rival Schools

Once upon a time, so we are told, crime and lawlessness infected schools across the world, and pupils were forced to protect themselves. Taking matters into one's own hands is always dangerous, and like most threatened communities, vigilante action here becomes a euphemism for senseless violence, providing the excuse for another fighting game. Play two characters, Edge and Akira, in the arcade mode of the beat 'em-up with a new twist that threatens to usurp conkers as playground entertainment of choice.

Motorhead

Forget the gritty, time consuming realism of other PlayStation racers we could mention, and instead get an instant speed thrill from this futuristic driving sim. Repeatedly described as '*WipEout* with wheels', this is the best of the genre, and we're giving you the opportunity to take a car, the ASC ii, out for a one lap spin around the 'Goldbridge' track. Also included is a rolling look at some of the other features of the game.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

This month's rolling demo features action in the over-underworld of the future, where Channel Four's *Ultraviolet* never happened, and vampires took over the world. The unlikely hero is Raziel, a vampire fallen from grace, guilty of sprouting wings before given permission by Lord Kain. Witness the Earth shrouded in a cloud of night, where human beings are subject to the ruthless regime of nosferatu, and regularly 'leached'.

Turn to page 128 to find out how to get the most out of your exclusive cover CD.

Max Power Racing is the speed junkie's ultimate fantasy. Over thirty genuine production cars to choose from. Engines to tune. 30 different tracks to rip up and a speed limit of whatever the hell you like. Turn up the ICE, slam your foot to the floor and don't slow down for anything.

INFOGRAMES

PlayStation

EUTECHNYX™

MAX POWER RACING

THE ULTIMATE RACING GAME

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Upton, Poole, Dorset, BH16 5SN
Tel: 01202 622226 Fax: 01202 632403

DISTRIBUTION
MMC, Octagon House,
White Heart Meadows, Ripley, Woking,
Surrey, GU12 6HR
Tel: 01483 211222
Fax: 01483 224541

Front Cover: Image supplied by Squaresoft.

Station ISSN: 1463-6263

© Rapide Publishing Ltd 1999

Registered in England No. 3606198

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This issue is dedicated to Paul Mellerick (1971-1999)

Viva STATION...

Last issue, in a semi-drunken state, I discussed how the typical gaming lull after Christmas wouldn't rear its ill-favoured bonce in 1999. And even though I was feeling exceptionally disoriented at the time, it appears to have been a legit statement – amazing! When we initiated the process of creation which brought this issue of STATION to the shelves, new software for the PlayStation seemed like a distant memory, and for once my desk was actually tidy! Now, as we put this issue to bed, it's an entirely different tale. The surface of my desk is a dim recollection, buried, as it is, beneath a mountain of games. PlayStation software literally invades my every orifice (I can't sit down without accidentally sitting on a CD...).

And these games have been finding their way into our office from all around the globe. *Final Fantasy VIII* is the obvious starting point; some of you would have bought this issue simply for that one game. Yep, Squaresoft won't be discouraging anyone from continuing to rate them as one of the most creative developers/publishers in the world. *FFVIII* is breathtaking – need proof? Turn to page 10 for a complete rundown of the game and its history.

Another Japanese company slaps us in the face this issue. By the time you read this, the PAL version of Konami's *Metal Gear Solid* will be available, and we can simply say that every one of our readers should buy it. We've been playing it on import for several months, and even though it's only a short game, we're still discovering exciting secrets hidden throughout the superbly designed levels; many in the office have played through the entire game a staggering four times and are still going back for more. (And no, Konami aren't paying me on the sly...)

The STATION demo disc has a footie feel for issue six, with exclusive playables of both *Premier Manager '99* and *Viva Football*. We're especially proud of the *Viva* demo, here you can pit Pele's all-conquering 1970 Brazil side against Maradona's Argentina of 1986 – every football fan's dream!

See ya next month, when our exclusive demo disc will be the biggest yet! S

Dazza – Editor

"The history of Final Fantasy is peppered with high points – its gameplay really achieved a massive following when the West woke up to the series."

The Final

FINAL FANTASY VIII

"Final Fantasy VIII is the most anticipated game of 1999 bar none. Utilising the ATB battle system of Final Fantasy VII, the plot follows the path of three new characters who start their campaign mission in a very similar style to the immediate predecessor."

Countdown

With *Final Fantasy VIII* at last gracing the game shops of Akihabara and many a Japanese front room, STATION takes a look at the history of a series which is now over ten years old but still fairly new to PlayStation owners.

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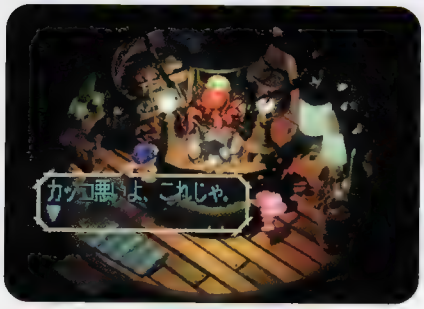
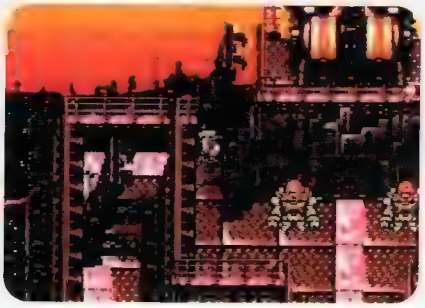
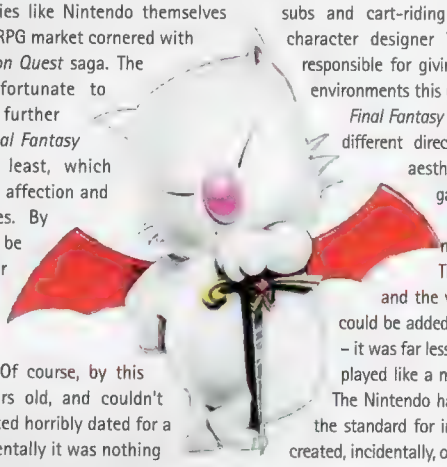


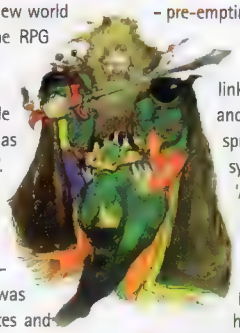


Way back in the mist-shrouded history of gaming's Palaeozoic period, c. 1987, Japanese developer Square released the first *Final Fantasy* for the NES. Its success was not immediate nor its future impact properly assessed because the early NES market was still dominated by companies like Nintendo themselves and Enix, who had the RPG market cornered with the still popular *Dragon Quest* saga. The 8bit Nintendo was fortunate to acquire two further instalments of the *Final Fantasy* legend, in Japan at least, which gradually gained public affection and support for the series. By 1990 it was deemed to be commercially viable for an English translation of the original title to be released onto the American market. Of course, by this time it was three years old, and couldn't really help but look looked horribly dated for a 'new' release – fundamentally it was nothing more than a simple top down RPG like the original *Zelda* – and it courted the image of a gaming curio in a market dominated by arcade freaks used to *Super Mario 3* and the like.



By now, though, *Final Fantasy* had achieved cult status in Japan and rumour had got around that Square was a sleeping Enix, able to produce brilliant RPGs – the dominant genre of the time – with a talent no less mystical than the features of the games themselves.

The series finally achieved its current acclaim, at least in Japan and America, after two *Final Fantasy* games were released on the SNES. The first game – titled *Final Fantasy II* in the US – followed on from the original NES translation. *Final Fantasy III* on the SNES introduced a solid cast of characters to a new world and was instrumental in consolidating the RPG genre as a whole in the 'States, as it was clearly one of the best games on a 16bit machine. The character line-up of blonde haired hero Locke and co. was just as strong as Cloud, Tifa and Barrett in Final *Fantasy VII*. And, amazingly for a cartridge game, it featured many story scenes and flashbacks as well as subgames involving underwater subs and cart-riding in closed mines – character designer Yoshitaka Amano was responsible for giving the in game sprites and environments this unique flavour.



Final Fantasy III pushed the genre in so many different directions and had such wonderful aesthetics that it hooked the US gaming public and stayed in the top end of the US charts for the majority of 1994 into 1995.

The story revolved around Locke and the vast selection of characters that could be added to your party during your quest – it was far less linear than *Final Fantasy VII* and played like a more complex version of *Zelda 3*. The Nintendo hardware was manipulated to set the standard for in game chip generated music – created, incidentally, on the machine's Sony sound chip – pre-empting the PlayStation's *Final Fantasy VII* heavy reliance on orchestral 'chip' music.

Indeed, you can easily spot other links between the first game in the series and the two PlayStation releases. Hit points spring from characters' heads and the battle system, although subsequently renamed 'Active Time Battle', is here in its most basic incarnation. The pointed hand cursor still flips between physical attack and spell casting and the map screens are physically identical only the 16 colours have been replaced by the thousands afforded by a PlayStation chipset. In terms of music, the same theme has run throughout all the games and achieves an epic style, similar to that of *Star Wars*.

The history of *Final Fantasy* is peppered with high points – its gameplay really achieved a massive following when the West woke up to the series. Even the Game Boy has had three mini variations of the games entitled *Final Fantasy Legends*. It seems that the cult wasn't established here pre-PlayStation only because the SNES *Final Fantasy III* wasn't released in the UK. That it would have caught on is obvious – dedicated players used an adapter and complex internal modifications to play the pricey import. Presently, many gamers will be in a similar situation with *Final Fantasy VIII* now available in Japan with its newly devised PocketStation compatibility.

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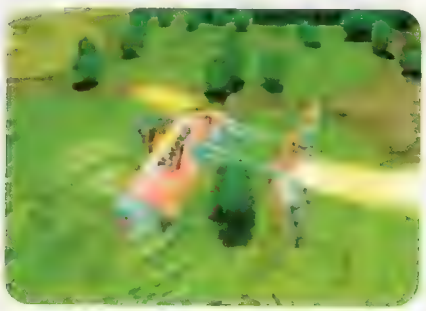
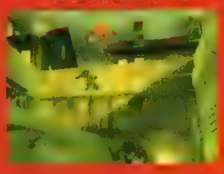
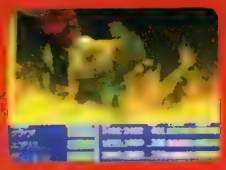
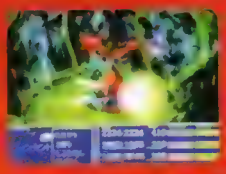


Square PlayStation

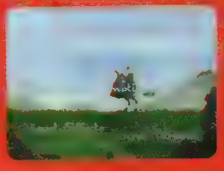
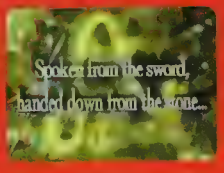
Final Fantasy VII

The first PlayStation *Final Fantasy* game, which curiously didn't have the famed character designer of previous instalments at the helm, this follows on from *FFIII*, in terms of plot if not math. Although originally scheduled for the N64, a decision by Square to move to CD based platforms rather than the restrictive cartridge base of the N64, coupled with Nintendo's greedy software royalties meant that it instead appeared on Sony's machine. The CD medium really did showcase Square's creative abilities to the max, for the first time we could see their heavily developed art department let renders rip through huge FMV sequences that were Hollywood-esque in their execution and easily the most advanced animations of the time. Square then went into graphical overload and proceeded to make a much more realistic sequel and the detective RPG *Parasite Eve*. The ATB battle system and story based gameplay introduced a whole new bunch of game heads to the otherwise worryingly nerdish hangout of the RPG.

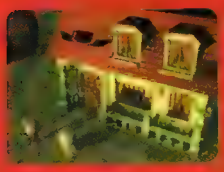
Final Fantasy Tactics

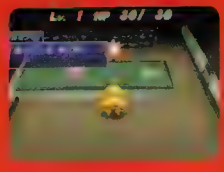
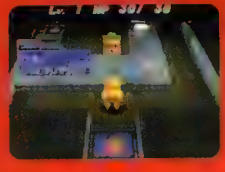
A combat based isometric RPG in the style of the PAL release *Vandal Hearts* from Konami. Using enemy characters from *Final Fantasy*, the game is a brilliant offshoot of the series and a classic in it's own right, surpassing Konami's PAL duo of RPGs. Fans of Games Workshop style table boardgames like *WarHammer* will revel in the blend of countryside castles and high tech weapons and spells. Sadly, though, it was never granted a UK release, only a US translation

Chocobo's Dungeon

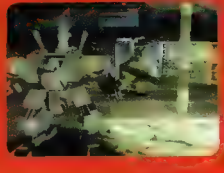
The yellow bird which is used as a vehicle through two SNES *Final Fantasy* games and the first PlayStation incarnation has two games to itself in Japan – *Chocobo's Dungeon 1* and *2* are shortly to be followed by *Chocobo Racing*. *Chocobo's Dungeon* is a fairly basic RPG aimed at children and despite the fact that it's only available in Japan, the graphics are below par and the only good thing we could possibly comment on would be the slapstick cut scenes. Everything is either super deformed or overly cute and we wouldn't recommend hunting this down.



Front Mission 2

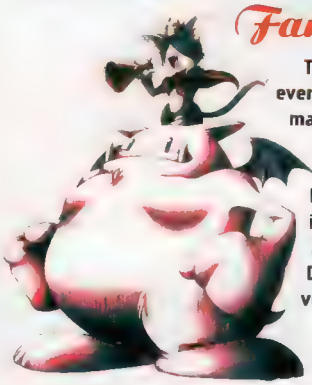
A mecha styled combat RPG which saw military robots stomping over all over the place. Possibly a little too Japanese for fans of *Final Fantasy* but important nevertheless as it joined *Final Fantasy III* on the SNES and was released on the PlayStation just after *Final Fantasy VII* made its Japanese debut. The dark, science-fiction cityscapes give it an all too familiar *Blade Runner* hue – the Japanese anime film industry seems to rely heavily on western science fiction.



Parasite Eve

A landmark collaboration between Square USA and Square of Japan, some of the staff from the Tom Hanks film *Apollo 13* were called in to assist with development – the game's director Steve Gray was one such member. Helping to Westernise the game further – in order to appeal to an American audience – was one Darnell Williams, the set designer from *Casper*. The main character, Aya Brea, is a private detective and the *Resident Evil* style game engine that flips into *Final Fantasy* style combat scenes is the precursor to the system used in *Final Fantasy VIII*. The human characters were the first that Square had ever tried to create to deliberately look realistic. A great success, particularly in America, Parasite Eve was originally based on a novel and subsequent film.

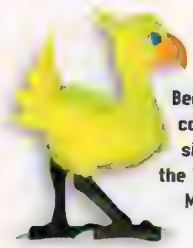
Fantasia - Final Grooves...



The music of the *Final Fantasy* series, for the most part composed by Nobuo Uematsu, has been immensely popular in Japan ever since the series started in 1987. The Japanese penchant for original game music (OGM) and orchestral reworkings of the main themes has meant that over 20 CDs have been released, based solely around the in game tunes and ditties.

There are romantic songs such as 'Love Will Grow' – based upon the title track – a gospel style bonanza in 'Pray' and a more groove led 'FF Mix'. Here on STATION, we've been privy to a mammoth four disc OGM compilation of *Final Fantasy VII*, which doesn't really inspire when you've heard all the tunes while playing the game already, but fans will still revel in the glory of instant access to key tracks. All 84 of them. We've also been lending our ears to *Final Fantasy VI Grand Finale*, which features tracks such as 'Milan de Chocobo' and 'Kids Run Through The City Corner' (the orchestra goes into Disney mode for the former while the latter is a string based arrangement). The whole album feels quite cinematic, and very like the background music for something like Cinderella. Or perhaps a silent movie, starring Charlie Chaplin.

There's a heavy duty warbling session towards the end, with some women occupying the Mariah Carey high register for as long as she can. Overall though, we can only recommend that you invest in these CDs if you're heavily into the style of music on offer. And *Final Fantasy*, of course.



Miniature Delights

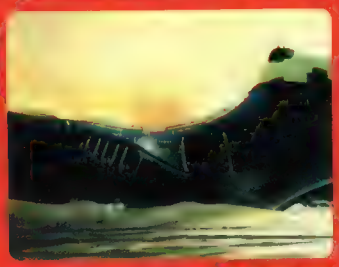
Because *Final Fantasy* has long been a popular game in Japan, spin off Anime series and merchandise have been around for a while. The largest collection of plastic figurines and keyrings are inspired by *Final Fantasy VII*: Barret, Tifa, Cloud and even the odd Chocobo are all available in six inch depictions for your delight. A quick office poll voted the fully rotatable and detachable Barret as the most entertaining novelty while the Tifa doll was decidedly dainty next to the Mr T lookalike.

More subtle fans may be interested in the selection of posters that the game has spawned due to its superb renders and memorable sketch art of the characters. Still, a trip to you local importer wouldn't be out of the question if these plastic people do anything for you.

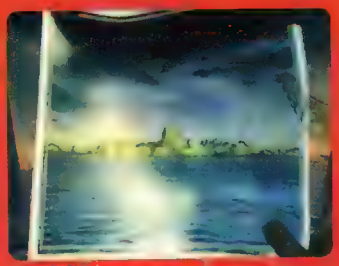
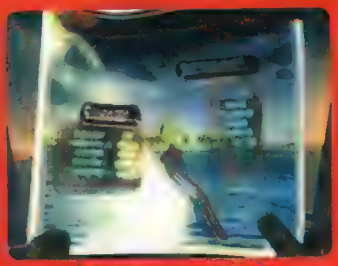
PROJECT K
FINAL FANTASY VII MERCHANDISE
FFVII 5" Models - £19 EACH
FFVII 3" Keychains - £6 EACH
FFVII Music CD'S - £16 EACH
FFVII Posters 20"X14" - £6 EACH
TEL: 0181 508 1328 / 0973 139 144
FAX: 0181 508 3845
www.projectk.com
Email:info@projectk.com

Final Fantasy Apocalypse Now!

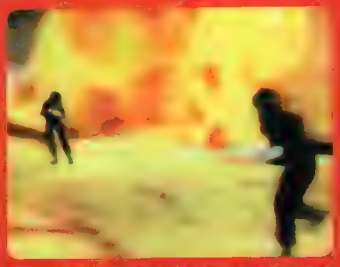
The *Final Fantasy* era has changed – the new world of the game is real, and the characters look like humans – just about. Witness our blow by blow account...



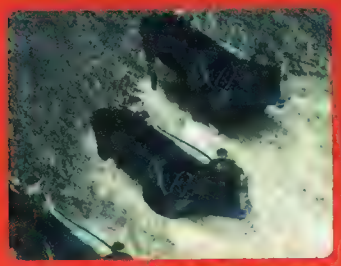
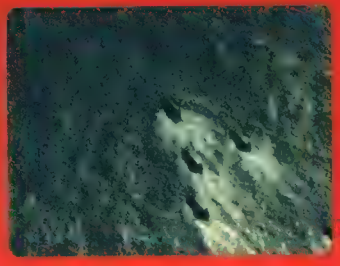
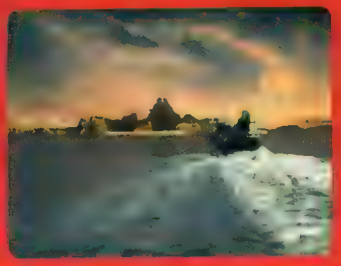
The opening scene of the game starts with a reflection of the moon, the camera pans down to reveal a fleet of high tech ships heading towards the land. The classical music that is ubiquitous with Square pipes up and there is a distinctly Hollywood feel to the proceedings as *Waterworld*-like tides splash and swirl beneath the metallic ocean vehicles.

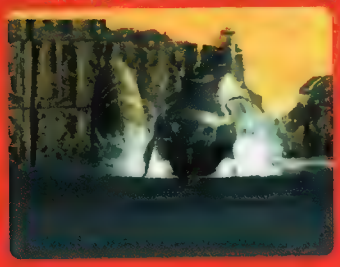
After the initial onslaught, we see a contemplative Squall looking towards the horizon before peering at his map and looking towards the fast approaching landfall where explosions riddle the shoreline. The realistic effects, such as Squall's hair, and the photo sourced skylines show how far improved the artists skills and techniques are.

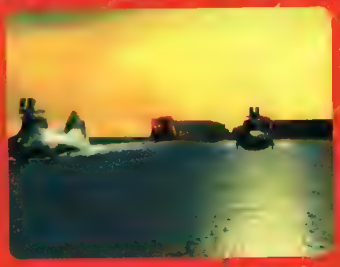


The enemy guards avoid the huge explosions caused by your fleet of ships and Squall goes for his oscar nomination with his 'I'm so intent on staring you out even my hair won't make me blink' pose... After the extreme facial close up, the turrets on top of the ships swivel and unload yet more firepower onto the land. Greenpeace will surely follow.

The aerial shots of the boats show them in formation, with one leading apart from the pack, until a brick wall presents itself. No matter, think Squall and friends as they plough [illegible] the heavy military metal [illegible] apparently.





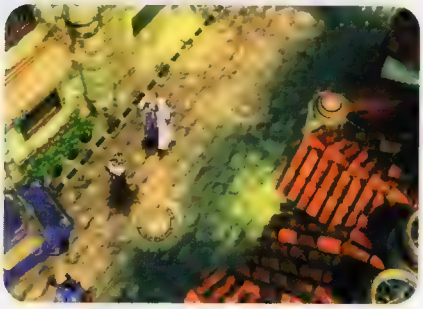
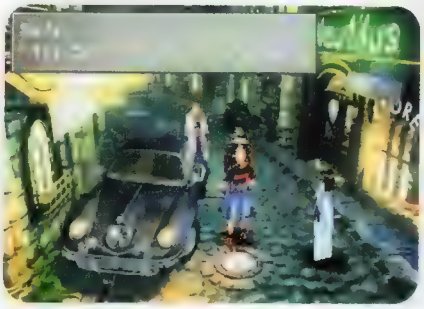
Pop goes the gunship. Squall and his team finally reach shore and the hull of the boat opens, allowing you to start your mission – the last shot in the sequence is in game with a rendered background. Square have obviously sought to maintain the link between the FMV and in game antics more closely than their previous RPG *Parasite Eve*.

Characters Studied

Graphically a development of the realistic *Parasite Eve*, and furnished with the new renders that Square of Japan have been slaving over for the past 18 months, *Final Fantasy VIII* is the most anticipated game of 1999 bar none. Utilising the ATB battle system of *Final Fantasy VII*, the plot follows the path of three new characters who start their campaign mission in a very similar style to the immediate predecessor. Squall – the effeminate warrior displayed on our cover – takes the lead role. Next up is the slightly younger recruit to the team, Zell, who wears a frankly disturbing pair of denim shorts and is better suited to unarmed combat rather than sword play or magic. All bases are then covered by the third character to make up the initial trio, Rinoa. A woman who bears similarities to Tifa from *Final Fantasy VII*. She is the key magic user, with abilities to cure the wounded and inflict the new variety of spells – such as the awe inspiring Tsunami.

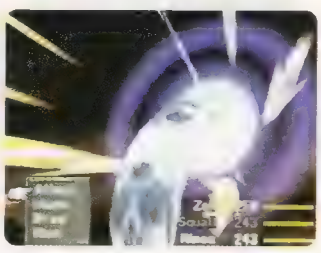
The game starts in Parisian style streets with a familiar *Final Fantasy* intro of moonlit military hardware, of the format that Square seem to be intent on keeping in their RPGs. From the off, though, the super deformed spiky haired characters of *Final Fantasy VII* have been removed in place of a much more normal (and probably Western friendly) selection of real humans rather than, say, the machine gun limbed Barret of before.

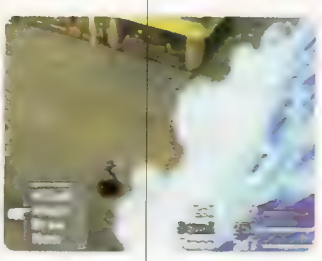
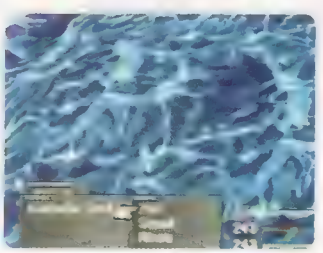
The first noticeable differences are the actual in game graphics, which are amazing – especially if you've never played the as-yet-unreleased-in-the-UK *Parasite Eve*. The trademark classical music then kicks

He Lives Under A Waterfall

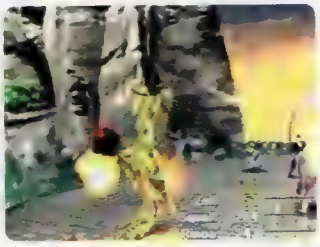
Tsunami – the first talent of Rinoa – is a spell which summons a stream of water which forms a dragon, mounts a magically appearing waterfall and falls to bits creating a mass tidal swell which comically envelopes all the enemies on screen and takes off a frightening amount of hit points. It's bloody amazing and has to be seen.



Round One, Fight!

The battle sequences use the familiar drop down menu system, but are easier to master than before. See the new enemies in all their glory and gawp at the character detail as the camera zooms in, *Tekken 3* celebratory style. The lighting on Squall's potion use is mightily impressive – just look at those beams. And this is only the start !



in reassuringly, only for the stunning fight sequences to once more slacken the jaw. As before, you can't usually see your enemies and random attacks, lunging headfirst into combat, are common. This Japanese version is quiet restrictive for the *Final Fantasy* virgin, but the combat system should be usable, even if the plot is largely clouded in darkness by kanji characters.

Indeed Japanese text has, unsurprisingly, always been the bane of import gamers but for RPGs the depth of language usually makes the title in question virtually unplayable. The drop down menus and point and click combat often mean that as long as you can bumble past the plot crossroads and understand the directions that are given to you, it's almost possible to go some way into the game. But, here at STATION our ethos has always been to wait for the PAL release of big games like this – it is painfully obvious that *Final Fantasy VIII* will be better if it is played played in English.

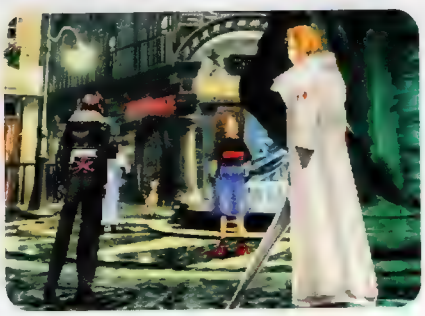
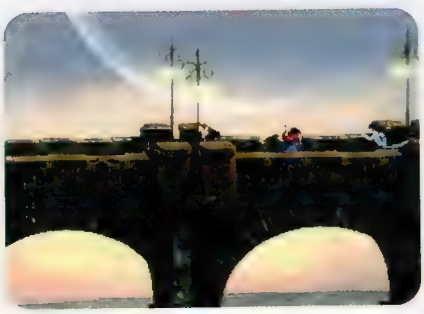
Without ruining the gameplay nuances, though, this Japanese version is a spectacle to behold even if it's not entirely clear what is going on. The rendered sequences that we've witnessed rival the streamed video seen in *Parasite Eve*, but it's in game where the brilliance of the artists and programmers really reveals itself. The 'Tsumani' spell mentioned earlier casts a ball of light towards the sky, transforms into an *Abyss*-type moving cylindrical mass of water before transmogrifying into a huge screen filling dragon, which mounts a magical rock and, liquefying once more, cascades down. It's the most clever use of PlayStation 3D you'll ever see – continued in battle sequences which are over the top and libèrally doused in flamboyant sparkles and reflective polygons, much like watching a fireworks display. And all of this is within the first hour of play!

FINAL FANTASY VIII

Led further into the game by a cloaked man named Seifer, the city streets melt away into industrial backdrops as your party encounters fantastical dragons and insect style foes, along with the mundane guards. The PocketStation compatibility is expected to utilise the realtime internal clock and game saves will undoubtedly have little icons like *Street Fighter Zero 3* with which to decorate the front of the PocketStation. Because of the guaranteed popularity of the title, it seems likely that PocketStation sales will also benefit... a thought surely not lost on Sony's marketing narcs.

There is now huge anticipation for the English version of the game, but the PAL version hasn't been scheduled for release until September, leading one to speculate whether the industry actually learnt anything at all from the problems of *Metal Gear Solid*. The American version is due at least two months before ours, so eager fans and ELSPA can consider themselves forewarned – the message seems to be get your machine chipped now!

"The game starts in Parisian style streets with a familiar Final Fantasy intro of moonlit military hardware"

STATION NATION

There was a great response to the new letters page last month, and it will remain a regular feature of STATION. This is your page, though, where you can respond to articles or stimulate debate and slog it out amongst yourselves – unlike other mags we're happy just to let you have your say, and won't try and reply with witty retorts or jokes at your expense. The editor does, however, reserve the right to cut letters for reasons of length.

Fair (Scottish) Game Developer

I read with a lot of interest the article on page 127 of STATION#3 (Development Awards Go Annual). I want to design and develop games when I eventually finish my education. How can it be called 'Games Developer UK' if it's in Scotland? Okay, Scotland is part of the UK, but how can I get to Scotland and back just to show my ideas? My work will go unseen unless the venue is changed. This is a shame, because unless I hear from a developer that my ideas are crap, I'm not going to listen to my family's opinions. I expect you read, if not wrote, the article, so you'll know a spokesman said that 'attracting female talent is something we should definitely consider'.

Oh, before I forget, I'd like to refer to the article 'Men And Joysticks' (STATION#3, page 40-43). I HATE MAKING TEA. I LOVE MY PLAYSTATION. YES, I AM A GIRL. I also think that I am a VERY competitive girl. I doubt I am as innocent as I look. I was disappointed about *Thrill Kill*, loved *Soul Blade*, got frustrated at *Resident Evil*. I just love playing games. You reckon that around 5% of gamers are female, but 1% of those are worse than any boy. Like me.

PS – I think my letter is too long to print, so please don't bother.

• ANNA CARTER. BIRMINGHAM.

By Fair Means Or Foul

I love your magazine and free demo disc, and am totally hooked on PlayStation games. I would like it even more if you could throw in a new, more updated cheat book for all of us STATION lovers. Thanks for the 'Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About PlayStation But Were Too Afraid To Ask...' booklet.

• STEPHEN MULHOLLAND. CO. ARMAGH.

Well Lit Ire Starter

I have so far managed to bite my tongue when reading FIRESTARTER, but now feel I must reply to the constant goading of Dave Perry.

Regarding 'Winter of Discontent' (issue 5 – ed), I feel that the lull in game releases after the Christmas period is only to be regretted by the specialist press – and I appreciate it must be frustrating to struggle for copy during the months of January and February for you. For everyone else it comes as glad respite. And I mean everyone!

1) The publishers – Are bound to maximise profits by pushing titles during the Christmas period. By my reckoning (and I don't have the exact figures to prove it) games publishers make around 90% of their profit during this period, and therefore must spend the majority of their marketing budget to avoid being overlooked by the consumer. Big releases in the post-Christmas months would therefore realise smaller sales anyway, competing for an audience without much money, and likely to be drawn to January sales of other consumables (games tend not to get the same kinds of reductions, largely because their appeal lasts longer than a River Island jacket...). The exceptions to this rule, of course, are the *Gran Turismo*'s and *Metal Gear Solid*'s of this world, and one can hardly expect titles of such calibre to be released more than one at a time – any other title would run scared of the competition.

2) The gaming public – Welcome a brief period when they don't have to have the next best thing. Pubs also have a quiet time in January and February (as a rule), again due to lack of disposable income during the period. It's also a time for most of us to actually play the Christmas fuelled excess built up in one's personal game library! The long dark nights are whiled away catching up on games unplayed, so there is no room for more new titles.

3) Those new console owners – Probably enjoy the brief initiation period to their new toy, a chance to catch up on the triple 'A' titles they haven't experienced, and learn what the next best thing is going to be (from your esteemed pages), without having to make rash buying decisions. Many of them will probably opt for your mag and demo disc rather than a brand new game first off, saving them at least £30, and ensuring your sales remain bouyant. I'd be interested to see the ABC figures for December and January, I imagine they at least remain constant, and wouldn't be surprised if they actually went up...

Despite this, I remain a loyal STATION reader, and look forward to having my hackles well and truly raised by your resident arsonist both this month and for some time in the future.

• STU WOODINGS, CHRISTCHURCH.

More Fires Started

Interesting points raised by both Firestarter, page 17 of issue 4, and your censorship feature in issue 3.

I'm not sure, however, what the way around contentious decisions by the BBFC is, and I think that solutions need to be proposed as well as problems pointed out. It is also apparent, however, that the outcry surrounding games such as *GTA* or *Carmaggedon* only help marketing by creating some form of notoriety: after all it is better to be talked about etc.

Perhaps the way forward is to abandon the practice altogether, after all censorship has long since been dropped in theatre or literature, it seems that 'popular' art forms are the only ones likely to engender anti social behaviour.

There have been many books that have inspired rioting and violence (*Tom Jones* for one respectable example) and likewise plays (*Six Characters in Search of an Author*), which have subsequently made the canon. Music has also inspired the seedier elements of society (think Charles Manson or thrash metal). None of these forms are censored. Neither do they carry the parental guidance rating. Historically, freedom of expression in each of these genres has changed society for the better, encouraging us to be less draconian and more libertarian in our outlook. They also provide a useful voice against oppression – unacknowledged legislators, if you like – both within our country and more importantly abroad.

I don't think there has ever been a game created with a discernable message for good or ill, mores the pity. *Carmageddon* certainly doesn't posit the theory that it's OK to run people over, whatever the BBFC may think and *GTA* falls short of actually recommending that you steal a car for a laugh – perhaps we should get rid of cars, then these problems wouldn't exist at all.

In actual fact, for the adolescent in today's increasingly fragmented world, multiplayer games are important forms of (male) bonding. Perhaps the authorities should welcome the more contentious games, after all, they, so much more than any other form, seem stir up something like rigorous intellectual debate amongst gamers. They ask questions and force gamers to think in ways that nice, approved titles don't. They could be the last defence against a brave new world of dumbed down and spoon-fed entertainment, and I for one love 'em.

• NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED.

TO HAVE YOUR SAY ABOUT ANY STATION OR GAMES RELATED SUBJECT SEND YOUR OPINIONS TO:

STATION MAGAZINE, 1 ROMAN COURT, 48 NEW NORTH ROAD, EXETER EX4 4EP OR EMAIL THE EDITOR ON: DARREN@RAPIDE.CO.UK

FIRESTARTER

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Dreams Can't Come True

Dreams Can't Come True

Dreams Can't Come True

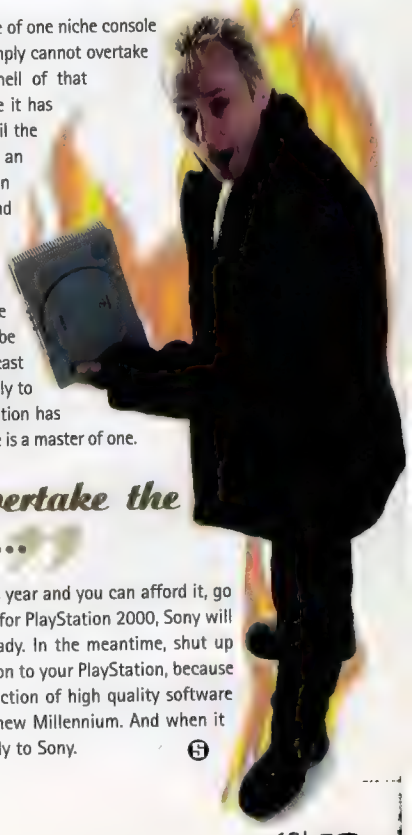
This month Dave Perry spits vitriol at hacks who try to second guess the mighty Sony Corp. Read on, for you too may be guilty of the crimes described herein...

The trouble with this industry is that we're never satisfied. Just when we've got things good, we have to start looking around for something better. I fully accept that for gamesplaying to survive as a pastime it has to keep evolving and improving, but the chances are that many of us spend far too much time longing for technological holy grails that, quite frankly, we do not need just yet and far too little time appreciating the grey box we already have sat at home.

It seems that PlayStation 2000 is the latest accepted name for Sony's follow-up to the most successful games console of all-time. The name alone suggests that we won't be seeing this new machine until the new Millennium, yet still the 'experts' love to speculate and grab at straws over whether Sony will or will not reveal their next generation super console this year, just in time to scupper the European launch of Dreamcast. Well let me tell you, Sony aren't really that worried about Sega's Dreamcast. And even less about its European launch, after all, Europe represents such a small market to the games world these days that it is usually little more than an afterthought on the budget sheets. It may be an uncomfortable fact, but we just don't matter on this side of the panet anymore!

So, why on earth do people think that Sony would rush the release of such an important new platform purely to throw a spanner in the works of what is set to be just another small fly in their ointment? They already have the current market leading console, the largest consumer base and they've successfully seen off a far more powerful machine and long established publisher in Nintendo. Oh yeah, don't expect the N64 to be around much beyond this year, the arrival of the Dreamcast and the historical duopoly that always manifests itself within the games world will see Nintendo's 64bit underachiever being read its last rights around Christmas time.

The Dreamcast launch is just another case of one niche console leaving as another arrives. The Dreamcast simply cannot overtake the PlayStation, there's not a chance in hell of that happening. What it will do in the short time it has before the arrival of PlayStation 2000 is fulfil the desire of hard-core gamers looking for an exciting new format to spend their cash on and provide them with an entertaining and different catalogue of gaming experiences. You can forget about tech specs and add-on type thing-ummies, at the end of the day all that matters is the sheer quality of the gaming, and this is where Sega could be shooting themselves in the foot. The Dreamcast is basically a games console trying desperately to be a jack of all trades, when, as the PlayStation has proved in spectacular style, all you need to be is a master of one.



"...Sony aren't worried, the Dreamcast simply cannot overtake the PlayStation, there's not a chance in hell of that happening..."

So, if you really want a Dreamcast this year and you can afford it, go and buy one. Don't bother waiting around for PlayStation 2000, Sony will roll that out when they are good and ready. In the meantime, shut up with your pointless speculating and hang on to your PlayStation, because it will still provide you with the best selection of high quality software and gaming experiences this side of the new Millennium. And when it does come, 2000 will belong, quite literally to Sony.

NEXT MONTH

GLOBAL EXCLUSIVE!
RC STUNT COPTER

EPIC REVIEW!
FINAL FANTASY VIII

Fresh from the queues around the block in Japan we'll bring you an ultra-hot import review of the sequel to perhaps the most adored and time-consuming PSX games ever. Expansive in both plot and FMV cut sequence it should dominate the lives of many for months to come...

RIP-SNORTING REVIEW!
ROLLCAGE

Psygnosis' wall-crawling, blurry-eyed, road-gobbling cool-soundtracked racer vrooms into our pages with a screech of great big tyres. Is it a wheeled *WipEout*, or mere style above function? Answers next month.

ALSO REVIEWED:

RUGRATS
LOBAL DOMINATION
POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING
TANK RACER
KKND 2
FA SOCCER MANAGER
ASTERIX

BIGGEST FREE DISC EVER!

Look forward to an even larger selection of demos than you'll have ever seen before on our utterly unofficial free disc. These games will be so bang-up-to-date, we can't even reveal what they are for fear of breaking the Official Secrets Act.

STATION – ON SALE 25TH MARCH 1999

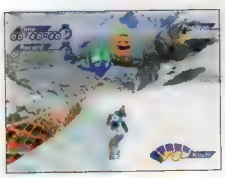
The unofficial PlayStation mag that Jesus would buy if he returned to walk the Earth

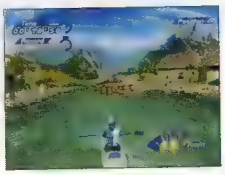
THE FASTEST WAY DOWN IS TO RUSHDOWN.

There's enough snowboarding games out there. But imagine an ultra-fast moving arcade game with kayaking as well. And why not throw in a 3:1, with only a mountain bike between you and a mouthful of gravel.

That's what makes Rushdown unique. Kayaking, mountain-biking and snowboarding all in one. Instant action, breath-taking scenery, original soundtrack and fifteen courses from around the world. Rushdown's philosophy is simple: if you're not living life on the edge, you're taking up too much room.

Rushdown. Be prepared for the ride of your life.





to the extreme
RUSHDOWN

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I Spoke Too Soon...

The thought of another Codemasters racing game fills us all with glee, even though they've gone and ditched the high speed stuff and turned to raw thigh power.

No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking

Publisher: Codemasters

Developer: UDS

Release Date: Late Spring

Game Type: Racing Sim

PAL Percentage Complete **60%**

The Early Verdict

No Fear D.M.B: For

Codemasters' pedigree speaks for itself, it will be a refreshing change from petrol-driven antics.

No Fear D.M.B: Against

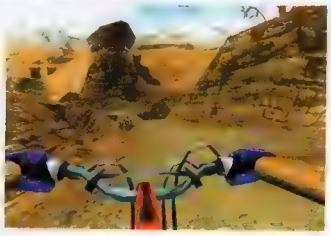
Very hard to get the feel of a pedal-driven contraption 'right', we'd have thought.

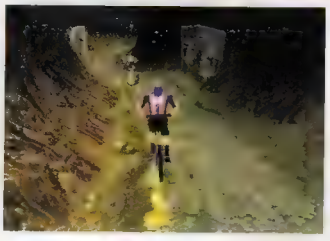
Anticipation Rating 90%

A Codies racer – as thoroughly desired as a cut in interest rates and lower income tax.

Concept Description

Put on tight shorts and hurl yourself down a hillside perched on some bits of aluminium.



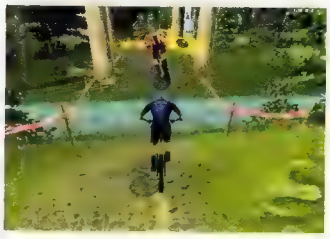


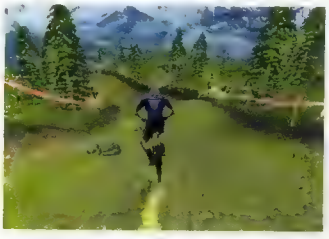
The UKs most consistently admirable software publishers aren't ones for resting on their laurels, what with the inevitably massive *Prince Naseem Boxing* on the way and this, the latest usage of the versatile graphics engine first seen in *TOCA* that's been progressively tweaked and upgraded to keep it ahead of the pack. No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking takes on board sponsorship from the gung-ho sloganeering clothes label and gives the player an opportunity to act like one of those blokes from that Pepsi Max commercial without risk of a painfully snapped collarbone. Still in the middle stages of development it will deliver pedal-powered action across ten cosmopolitan locations, spanning dust-strewn deserts in Morocco, densely-wooded domestic forest tracks, volcanic landscapes in Japan and so forth, with each providing a distinct flavour of challenge and racing.

The ultra-lightweight cycles can be set up and adapted for the various forms of terrain you'll be likely to encounter, with a number of suspension variables and forms of brake that can make all the difference between a quick time and a spell in traction after plunging off of one of the sheer drops that bracket the narrow tracks. Fifteen other riders all competing for the same sliver of space can only make this worse of course, especially as it will be possible to damage the bike from a fall or collision.

Winning races enables you to upgrade your steed to a more exorbitantly expensive model, no doubt with bulbous great frame tubes, Shimano gears and that most important of style accessories, Spokey Dokeys. All the usual competitive and solo game forms are present and correct, although whether the utterly brilliant four player split screen/link up mode (as seen in *TOCA 2*) will make a reappearance is not yet clear. Go on lads, you know it makes sense. Of course the high sonic production values that made *CMR* so convincing will be making a return, with convincing crunching gravel FX and a 'pumping' audio track that hopefully won't follow the same train of thought as EAs typical cringeworthy guitar histrionics they insist on slapping over games of this type. The only question remains is can UDS simulate the particular sensation of a razor-sharp racing saddle through the Dual Shock facility? Let's hope not...

> "...sponsorship from the gung-ho clothes label gives opportunity to act like one of the blokes from that Pepsi Max commercial..."





ABOVE: Like *Colin McRae Rally*, the surrounding scenery in the forest sections looks convincingly mossy and damp.

You Dirty Rat

The joys of scrambler biking could well have finally been transferred to a decent videogame form, thanks to some cuddly Norwegian types.

ABOVE: Posy stunts are possible during jumps much like this one, although getting them wrong leads to an even bigger smack upon landing.

With the distinctly underwhelming Moto Racer 2 and Jeremy McGrath both failing to satisfactorily simulate the gravelly pleasures of off-road motorcycling, the way was well open for a game to come in and be the mud-caked two-wheeled *Gran Turismo*.

Slipping 'n sliding quite nicely into this role is Dirt, a high-revving racer that's been in development for quite a while, but come on dramatically in recent months. Reproducing the constant bumpiness and seat-of-the-pants ride of a dirt bike is a tough task, but FunCom have captured this elusive element rather well, with the bike and rider jigging and thudding convincingly over the various whoops, furrows and leaps that litter the windy tracks. Constant adjustments to the rider's balance and weight are necessary to keep the tyres in contact with the ground and to stay upright after a jump plus judicious use of the foot-down powerslide facility to help drag the bike through twisting sections. Get it wrong and crash into a stationary object and the rider gets thrown off with eye-wateringly realistic-looking results, his ragdoll-like body being tossed end over end, only to get up and hobble back to the bike to kick-start it.

Collisions with other bikers are even more entertaining as you can inadvertently (or not...) knock them off their motorcycle with your back wheel, although this can often end in an embarrassing bit of face-planting of your own.

Tracks are set in beach front, desert, mountainous and foresty areas with varying surfaces ranging from grippy tarmac to cloying sand, each requiring a drastically different approach to taking the curves, while three grades of bike are available up to 500cc, although even the junior 125cc was quite a blimmin' handful to say the least. The all-important engine note is particularly pleasant on the ear as well, popping and farting away with a realistic burble, probably something to do with the developers hanging a mike off the back of a Norwegian scrambling champion's back mudguard as he raced about for a day. Dirt surprised us all in the office with its smart graphics and chunky playability, so we're hungry for the finalised tarted-up version that should be ready in a couple of months time.

"Get it wrong and crash into a stationary object and the rider gets thrown off with eye-wateringly realistic-looking results..."

Dirt

Publisher: TBC

Developer: FunCom

Release Date: Late Spring

Game Type: Racing Game

PAL Percentage Complete 80%

The Early Verdict

Dirt: For

Superlative bumpiness of track surface and active, lively feel to handling.

Dirt: Against

Low-speed handling can seem a touch iffy at points.

Anticipation Rating 75%

Should make a welcome change from run-of-the-mill racers and fill a long open market niche. High playability factor will guarantee good press coverage.

Concept Description

Buzzing-bee motorbikes burn around hazardous undulating tracks.

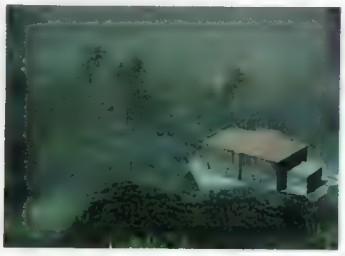
Under The Rainbow

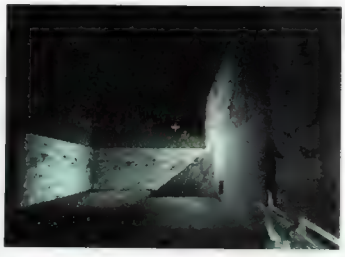
Ever wanted to dress up in military gear, ponce about with infra red weapons and do it all for a good cause ? Well, play Rainbow Six and anti terrorism thrills can be yours. The bomb is ticking...

As demonstrated by Metal Gear Solid and the imminent *Syphon Filter*, the 'intelligent' first-person PC shoot 'em-up has finally released its spore upon the PlayStation. The hot property in which it seems wise to invest appears to be any shooter with added strategy or, more particularly, which touts the current buzzword – stealth – in its development brief.

Red Storm's Rainbow Six game did very well on the PC, and videogame translations of Clancy's novels are traditionally perceived as suited to the slightly older desktop demographic.

It uses an open 3D environment, much like *Quake*, and you control a team of experts in a effort to thwart the schemes of international terrorists. These are the first PlayStation screen shots that have so far been seen, and although we weren't expecting it to resemble the PC version greatly (as the modern IBM clone is packed with more 3D graphics hardware than a NASA mainframe), we are, quite frankly, impressed. While the PSX has excelled itself with racing and beat 'em-up titles, the 3D shooter has been mysteriously absent since *Exhumed* and





Speaking To The Rebels

Since backing the doomed Atari Jaguar, Rebellion have remained fairly silent. We asked them about this PSX debut.

STATION: RAINBOW SIX IS A COMPLEX GAME WITH A HEAVY EMPHASIS ON 3D. HOW WILL YOU COPE WITH THE DETAILED LEVELS?

REBELLION: [It] is definitely pushing the hardware to perform. We have been able to construct some very challenging levels, through specific PSX design, and are creating the best play experience we possibly can.

STATION: WHICH ELEMENTS OF THE PC TITLE ARE YOU HOPING TO FOCUS UPON FOR THE PLAYSTATION CODE?

REBELLION: Playability is first and foremost. Gameplay is what makes Rainbow Six fun and interesting. Detailed real world spaces and decision-making are going to be important elements. We won't be able to go into as much depth in some areas (like the planning phases), but we will be concentrating on the mood, music and sound.

STATION: THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF TALK ABOUT THE VIABILITY OF LARGE 3D PC GAMES ON THE PSX, ESPECIALLY WHERE MULTIPLE PLAYERS ARE CONCERNED. WILL YOU BE USING THE SERIAL LINK?

REBELLION: Our two initial targets were: a) how to make a great control interface and b) how to make the best use of the PlayStation hardware. In order to make a great game, it needs to be a great single player experience first. We will not be using the serial link for this one, although it may be considered for a sequel.

LEFT TO RIGHT: The facial detail is superb compared to titles like *Final Doom* and *Exhumed* which have comparatively vague characters; it's bad enough to be confronted with a night mission, but when you've got water to contend with as well, things are very difficult.

the like. The progress in developer skill on the PlayStation has made the genre revisited look stunning.

Put in perspective, the prospect of a marginally simplified port, with traces of N64 classic *Goldeneye*, is one that most PlayStation owners should embrace as a respite from the flood of clichéd and insubstantial cack or sequels that were released at the tail end of last year. The fact that it's yet another PC conversion in the wake of *Populous, Dungeon Keeper 2* and *Carmageddon* is a slight downer, but at least it is being handled by Rebellion, an experienced code team back after a brief absence, and using the PlayStation for the first time.

The 3D intensive game areas, which range from indoor office buildings to more agricultural play pens, are going to be slightly smaller than the PCs levels, but the character detail, with *Goldeneye* style texture mapped faces, will remain similar. Crucially for the PlayStation, the controls have been adapted and will indeed benefit from using a Sony pad. Dual Shock and analogue targeting look to be two minor, yet exciting, factors – if you've ever sampled *Goldeneye* you should relate to this.

At the moment, there isn't much competition for Rainbow Six. *Doom* clones are more action based and the ones that exist are over a year old anyway. Here at STATION, we feel that a thinking man's shoot 'em-up is exactly what the market needs – we see far too many derivative and copycat games pass through the office weekly. Even though we are speaking about a PC conversion, it's so refreshingly original and bloody ambitious for the PlayStation that we have to commend the developers simply for trying (although expect no leniency should they fail...). Naturally we shall be covering any developments, and watch with baited breath as Rebellion negotiate the ever tricky portal between desktop and console.

"...game areas are going to be slightly smaller than the PCs levels, but the characters, who have *Goldeneye* style texture mapped faces will remain similar. It's exactly what the market needs, original and bloody ambitious..."

Rainbow Six

Publisher: **Take Two Interactive**

Developer: **Rebellion/Red Storm**

Release Date: **June**

Game Type: **Strategic Shooter**

PAL Percentage Complete **60%**

The Early Verdict

Rainbow Six: For

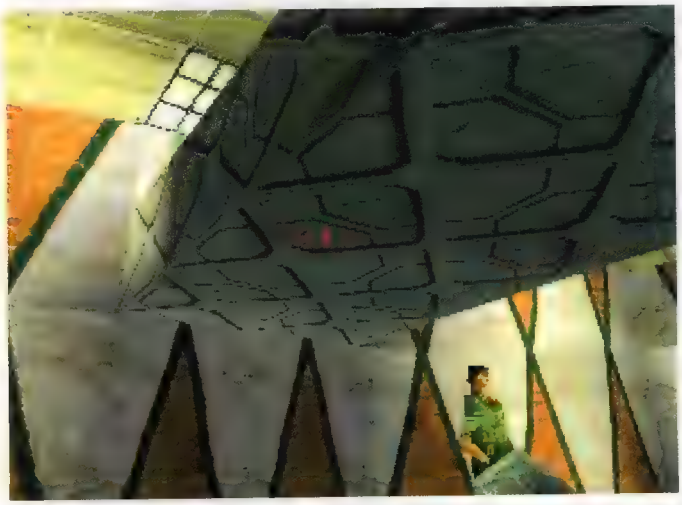
Stealth based gameplay, intellectually challenging shooter.

Rainbow Six: Against

Another PC conversion.

Anticipation Rating 85%

Reputation preceeding it, this could be the thriller we've been waiting for.



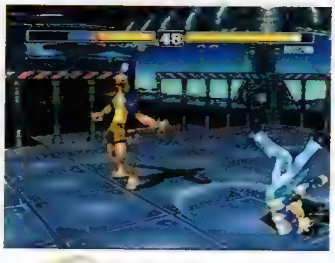
CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN: The 3D engine will be put to the test with a 360 degree 'look everywhere' viewpoint; while the B&Q customer ventured into the large shielded tool shed, he didn't realise he was about to be shot in the back; players of *Goldeneye* will spot the similarity between this shot and the control deck on the boat in the Bond game. Coincidence?

Concept Description

Computer game Clancy, *sans* Jack Ryan.

The Best Of The Bestial

While making animals fight for entertainment in the real world is best left to countryside dwellers, in PSX-Land it's all hunky dory.



Like all fighting games, the first Bloody Roar suffered from an all-too familiar syndrome known in short as *WSIBIWIAGT3*, or 'Why Should I Buy It When I've Already Got *Tekken 3*'. This blunted the appeal of otherwise tidy games such as *Dead or Alive*, *Rival Schools* and *Cardinal Syn* to the point where they were mercilessly under-marked and devalued, an unfortunate state of affairs as they've got plenty of gameplay zest and playability pizzazz. However, now the initial buzz around *T3* has dwindled the time is ripe for a fresh-faced new contender to step into the ring and put its fists up, and Bloody Roar 2 could well steal in with a flash of fangs and nab the belt for hottest current fighting game.

Animal Hospitalized

The range of fauna the scrapping heroes can transform into would wow David Attenborough:

JENNY

She's buxom, blonde and a bat! Yep, the seductive Jenny can transform herself from a mini-skirted minx into a pointy-eared flying rodent at a moment's notice, although making 'Skree' noises to locate her position is sadly out of the question.

BUSUZIMA

This bulgy-eyed chap is no oil painting in his *Homo sapiens* guise, but once Busuzima's in his reptilian form, he's even uglier. Being a chameleon he can also turn invisible periodically and use his lolling tongue to ensnare the unwary.

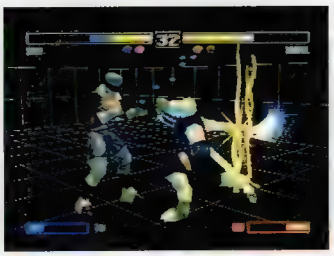
STUN

Wearing a wooly hat doesn't really disguise the fact that Stun is quite obviously more fly than man, although it takes a quick change before his superb-looking translucent wings appear, and then he won't let no man pull his legs off one by one.

Claws for Concern

The basic form hasn't changed drastically from the original incarnation seen last year, with the mêlée taking place in a walled area that precludes the possibility of action-ending ringouts and can be used to ram opponents into for added pain. Of course the superb transformative powers the combatants possess make a reappearance while a slew of new characters with weird alter-ego animal forms spice up the already spectacular proceedings.

Each fighter begins in a mundane human form, but after amassing enough animal power to fill a bar at the bottom of the screen, can change shape and become a faster and generally more



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Busuzima the chameleon can utilise his lady-impressing tongue as a kind of lasso; bat-girl Jenny is a lot less chubby than Alicia Silverstone, and I for one much prefer her far more, ahem, well-ventilated outfit; at certain points the background suddenly melts into a wire-frame Tron-type approximation of the real world, all the better to show off the motion blur effects; Moleman Baruryu doesn't use his claws for digging dirt, believe you me.

gratuitously violent beast version of themselves (see boxout). While the first *Bloody Roar* was undeniably spectacular to look at, it did rely heavily on fantastical visual effects heaped on top of the basic bodily action, with all manner of magnificent-looking neon streaks and azure trails left behind by the fighters' various attacks, and those retina-scorching pyrotechnics make a welcome return. But the other, more subtle aspects of the graphical spectrum also get a look in this time, and to an extremely impressive and technically adept degree. The programmers have obviously been conscientious enough not to just sit back and let the fireworks grab all the attention, but also seen fit to push the envelope in areas that are going to prove increasingly more important in the approaching final act of the PlayStation Mk 1.

gameplay but their presence acts on an almost subconscious level, ironically adding to the believability of the scene.

You're A Talon-ted Girl

This is yet further augmented by the superlative way in which the combatants' bodies flex, bend and react whilst on the move: there's no hint of laboured motion-captured animations as their polygonal frames react beautifully to being struck or hurled about, whilst the signature movements of each are plotted with a Disney artist's care and attention to detail. In their human incarnations Jenny the tart/bat struts coquettishly, while Busuzima the reptile boy lopes with a gangly gait that's entertaining to watch in itself, but once the animal change takes place things really start to rock.

"...We've never seen such profoundly flowing and balletic combos, with the fighters pulling off some of the most painful-looking yet aesthetically pleasing sequences of strikes..."

Bloody Roar 2 has some of the most smooth-skinned and realistically flesh-toned human body models seen in any game, easily equalling *Tekken 3* and quite arguably eclipsing it in some aspects. In their human forms some of the characters have bronzed skin, while others are pale as china, but each looks strangely real. This is particularly impressive, when you consider that it is achieved by remarkable real-time light-sourcing which precisely calculates how to shade each portion of a fighter's body. This effect is not particularly obvious at first, but play one of the levels that takes place at sunset and it becomes very apparent how much care has gone into making the characters look as real as possible whilst piling on the outrageous Anime stylings on top.

As well as the delicate polygon shading each fighter gets a 'genuine' moving shadow of their body cast onto the arena floor, which at dusk can stretch across up to half an arena width. Again this may not sound like a particularly important addition to the

We've honestly never seen such profoundly flowing and balletic combos, where the fighters pull off some of the most painful-looking yet aesthetically pleasing sequences of strikes, swipes and and slaps that sprout from nowhere and keep going ad infinitum.

It's almost worth not bothering to take part at all and just setting the CPU to play itself on the highest level, allowing the fight to become more like some kind of very aggressive dance that's viewed with your finger stuck jitteringly on the Fast-Forward button. This stems of course from the underlying combat system, and despite being bereft of a moves list it was still possible to string together some dazzling attacks, which suggests that the correct balance between swift playability and a decent level of difficulty in accessing the more extreme combos has been struck.

It looks as if there may be a vernal renaissance for the beat 'em-up, and we certainly won't be complaining.

Bloody Roar 2

Publisher: **Virgin**

Developer: **Hudson**

Release Date: **April**

Game Type: **Beat 'em-up**

PAL Percentage Complete **95%**

The Early Verdict

Bloody Roar 2: For

The eyeball-activating graphics that are simultaneously extreme and subtle, plus the ultra-kinetic action that doesn't paws for breath.

Bloody Roar 2: Against

Not as long-term technical as *Tekken 3*, lacks a dedicated side-step manoeuvre.

Anticipation Rating 85%

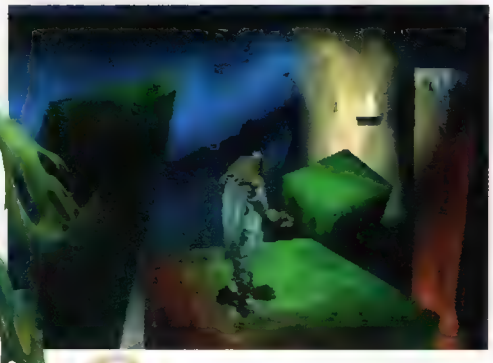
Seeing as *Soul Calibur* shockingly may or may not make it to the PlayStation, this could well be the best fighting game we'll see for a good while.

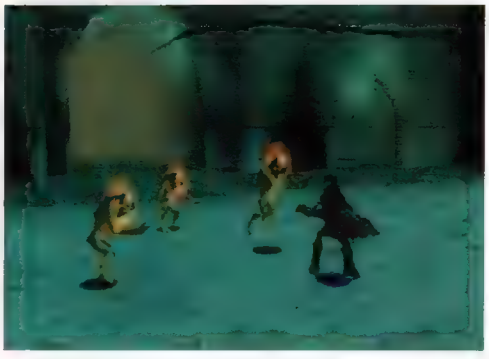
Concept Description

Altered Beast for the year two thousand and then some.

Dead Cert

Don't tell Buffy, but a new anti-hero is about to sweep soundlessly into town, and he's already a goner.





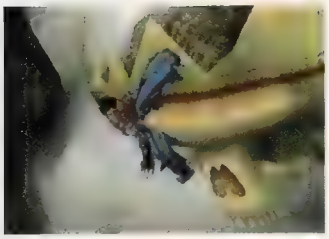
Since our last preview (issue 2) work has been progressing steadily on this latest magnum opus from the in-form Crystal Dynamics, so we thought you'd want an update on how the sinister world is taking shape. For those unfamiliar with Legacy of Kain, it is somewhat unusually centred around the fearful figure of a blood-lusting vampire, pretty non-standard fare for a videogame I'm sure you'll agree.

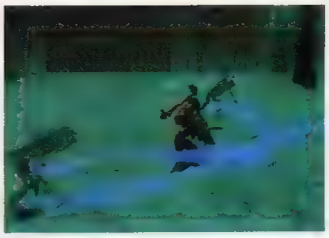
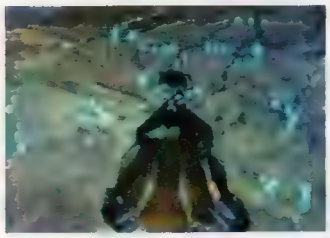
This intriguing lead character is a fallen nosferatu named Raziel, who has been cast out by his fanged brethren for daring to evolve wings before the head vampire Kain had deigned to, a cardinal sin in the dark nation that the blood-letters have created in their own twisted image. In this kingdom, humanity has been domesticated into the role of plaything for fledgling Children of the Night, and enormous furnaces gout billowing clouds of smoke to block out the sun's skin-blistering rays, heralding a 'time of beauty' for the brood, a 'dark renaissance' that will last for millennia, bathed in perpetual twilight.

Raziel's audacity in sprouting his new appendages warranted him an early bath in water (which is like corrosive acid to vampires of course) and an eternity of inky-black pain in a bottomless vortex. An endless period of tortured loneliness beckoned, until Raziel was roused by a jealous and vengeful presence called the

Worlds Apart

The visual difference between the astral and material planes is difficult to grasp from mere screenshots, with mundane reality looking earthy and warm but the spectral realm seeming somehow amorphous and suffused with a strange kind of azure glow that neatly captures the essence of being in a very odd place indeed.



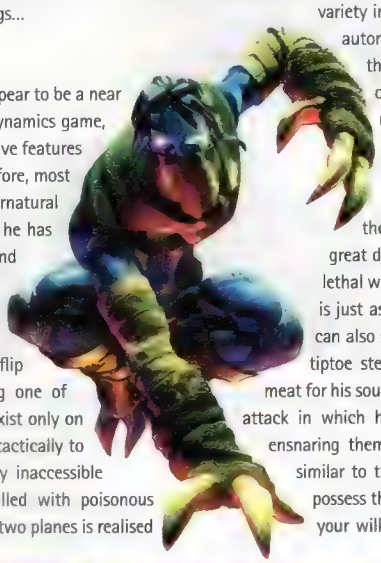



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Raziel swoops over the mist-shrouded landscape, his tattered wings fluttering in the foul-smelling slipstream: is he an im-pale imitation of Vlad, or what? A hapless mortal gets Raziel's point: Legacy of Kain is chock-full of weird diaphanous glowing thingies like this: oh dear, our boy is looking a touch teed off judging by his eyes. Best not offer him some Garlic Crunchies to cheer him up.

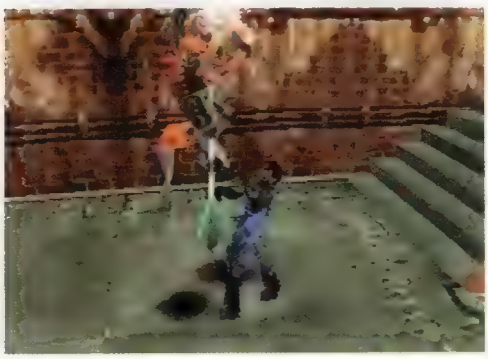
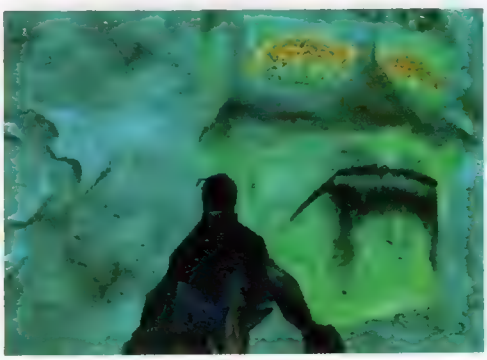
Elder. Before the rise of Kain's vampire kingdom the Elder had been surreptitiously feeding off of the soul-energy of unsuspecting humans like an eldritch parasite. Now it desires nothing more than vengeance against Kain, and Raziel would be a convenient tool for this purpose. In exchange for returning him to the material plane and slaying many of his former brethren the Elder would grant him a chance to avenge himself against the dread Lord Kain. The outset of this killing spree is where we join things...

Soul Survivor

While on the surface Soul Reaver may appear to be a near relative of that other macabre Crystal Dynamics game, *Akuji the Heartless*, it has several innovative features that set it apart from what has come before, most of which are based around Raziel's supernatural status. First amongst these is the ability he has to travel between the material plane and the eerie spectral dimension: initially he must find a planar portal to act as a gateway between the two realms of reality but later in the game he is able to flip between the two at will by employing one of seven mystic glyphs. Certain creatures exist only on one plane so this skill can be employed tactically to avoid confrontations or reach previously inaccessible areas, for example those which are filled with poisonous water. The effect of moving between the two planes is realised visually by a superb realtime use of the 'morphing' technique, with the ruddy colours of the material world melting and rippling into the muted shades of its ghostly parallel. Raziel can also phase through solid objects like locked doors by momentarily flipping onto the spectral plane, while his moth-like wings enable him to glide for short distances (buoyed up by thermals and air pockets for greater flying time) or parachute gently down from great heights without fear of damage. Thanks to his feral claws the bloody-handed one can also scale sheer vertical walls (much in the manner of his stablemate Gex) although this does leave him vulnerable to attack from whatever hellish denizens that may be close by. Taking these on hand-to-hand is possible via a surprisingly complex combat system that shows up the lack of variety in *Tomb Raider III*: Raziel can track assailants automatically or be manually switched between them, use whatever weapons he finds to strike or throw at enemies, dodge their blows and use combo attacks, all finished off by the merciless ending moves that can see him thrusting a lit torch into a rival vampire and setting them well and truly alight or picking them up and tossing their stunned bodies for a great distance, handy when there's some potentially lethal water, sunlight or spikes about. Avoiding a fight is just as valid (and fashionable) an option, as Raziel can also sneak about in finest *Metal Gear* fashion and tiptoe stealthily past the unwary, making them easy meat for his soul-devouring powers or the nasty 'Constriction' attack in which he literally runs rings around an opponent, ensnaring them in magically glowing bonds. In a manner similar to the *Abe's* games and *Messiah* it's possible to possess the body of a hapless mortal and bend them to your will, highly useful for manipulating inaccessible areas of the game. With these varied and ground-breaking features backing up what's guaranteed to be a visually stunning title the runes look good for Soul Reaver, particularly as it'll arrive just at the time when most will have finished *TRIII* and be hungry for more of the same. Just remember not to invite any fierce-eyed strangers over your threshold... G



"...hand-to-hand combat is possible via a fighting system that shows up the lack of variety in *Tomb Raider III*..."

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

Publisher: Eidos

Developer: Crystal Dynamics

Release Date: May

Game Type: 3D Action/Adventure

PAL Percentage Complete 65%

The Early Verdict

LOK: Soul Reaver: For

Compellingly dark scenario and unusual-looking graphics, plus the interesting multi-dimensional gameplay twists.

LOK: Soul Reaver: Against

It's in tough company competing with the likes of *Tomb Raider III*, and Raziel's loping run looks more Hanna-Barbera than Bram Stoker.

Anticipation Rating 85%

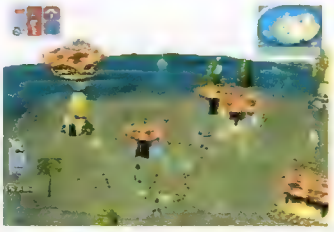
Knowing Crystal D's track record it's bound to be visually groovy, and the neat innovations could generate some fascinating gameplay situations.

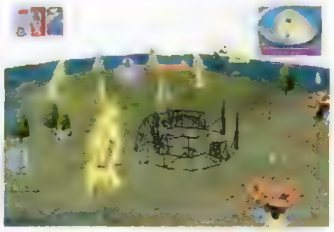
Concept Description

The dead stalk about in three dimensions (and sometimes a fourth).

Thank God, It's Only A Game

Everybody wants to rule the world. But actually getting out of your chair and doing it is something else. This is why gamers created God!





FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: From this menu of building spells you can select what kind of fortress you want; another shot of your followers busy building things – at least it looks like you won't have to kill any of them; a hard day's work can take its toll on your average Shaman, so here she takes a dip in the ocean to rest her weary bones. No, not really; using that great buzz-word, real-time, you can watch your temples, huts or whatever being erected before your eyes.

The more things change, the more they stay the same. We expect our sequels to act like they've been 'inspired' by the original game, to retain that comfortable familiarity of an old friend, but simultaneously inject something a bit newer and more exciting to keep our interest high and our pulses racing.

Now, most of you may not be aware of the history and legacy of the original game that we are talking about here. Without *Populous*, the God-game as it was called – in which you control many different aspects, usually including those normally found within nature's prerogative, of a real-time environment in order to defeat your enemy – would never have been born. It's arguably because of *Populous* that PlayStation games like *Command & Conquer* not only exist but are so refined and exciting to play.

So what are you going to do to the original *Populous* to make it better?

One answer, and the one that Bullfrog, both creator and developer of the game, has chosen to run with, is to take away the Godishness of the game. Yep, that's right. In a shock the-sequel-is-a-prequel kind of move, you're not God-like. You have aspirations to divinity, but you start this game as a mere Shaman.

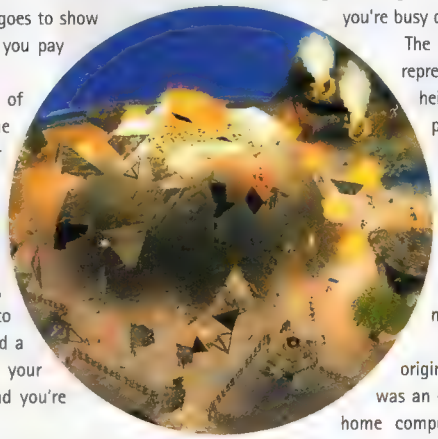
It's That Time Again...

Another spooky intro along with some more nice rendering. Only this time it's the woman who is at the centre of the trouble. Check out her powers and watch her don the scary mask. Now you provide a helping hand to guide her destiny and make her a God. Or should that be Goddess?

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: **Moving from island to island is the route to conquering worlds, but don't be too hasty: building up your base first then starting to explore is the key: the game moves around very quickly by not bothering with fine detail, in the middle of the screen you can see the Shaman casting one of her spells. Stand back and watch the fun.**

There are plenty of powers at your disposal which ordinary folk would still rate as suitably impressive and beyond their own ken to replicate with any degree of success, but nothing yet of the Zeus style omnipotence witnessed in the old classic. This also seems a good time to point out that the Shaman in this game is a high-priestess, which just goes to show that when you really annoy women you pay the price, big time.

So, take the supreme being out of Populous and lay him/her/it to one side. You're going to have to get your hands dirty and get down to the nitty gritty in order to climb up the ranks. You've still got the same type of control system regarding the issue of instructions to your troops, which direction to go in and what to do when they get there – be it build a hut to sleep in or a temple for your convenience – only this time around you're more personally involved.



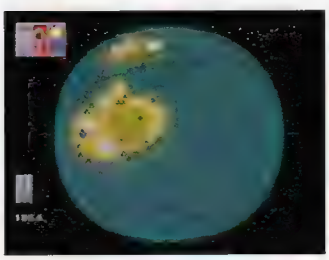
But in the last year of the millennium on this Earth, that's not really going to be enough. No, every title must now embrace the virtual reality of the 3D world, even in games where thinking is more essential than looking. Thankfully, from what we can see of the game so far, it's all good news on this front too.

The movement of the 3D camera is smooth and can be controlled with consummate ease. The graphics, which depict your progress, are functional and in no way flashy. Trust us, this is a good thing as it doesn't mess with your head when you're busy developing worldwide stratagem.

The advantage of having a revolving 3D representation of your world is simply that of heightened realism. Navigating oceans and ploughing across deserts doesn't really have the same impact in a 2D overhead view. Once you let fly with one of the more blinding of the 26 powerful spells at your disposal (erupting volcanoes and swarms of insects are just two to choose from), you'll truly appreciate the majesty of the 3D aspect.

It's also worth remembering that the original *Populous*, although highly complex was an enthralling game that converted many home computer owners into complete strategy freaks. We'll have to wait and see if the all-new version can do the same for PlayStation users, but it looks like this is going to be another one of those games that makes you wonder where the time went, three weeks after you started playing.

"...the Shaman in this game is a high-priestess, which just goes to **show that when you really annoy women you pay the price, big time.**"



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: **Stepping back from the action and seeing 'the world view' allows a swifter appraisal of the situation. A useful tool; and here's the videogame version of the before and after shot. You can see the framework of your building and then the almost-finished version. Mmm, not sure about the colour.**

Populous: The Beginning

Publisher: **Electronic Arts**

Developer: **Bullfrog**

Release Date: **March**

Game Type: **God Game**

PAL Percentage Complete **65%**

The Early Verdict

Populous: The Beginning: For

Taking control of people and ordering them about as you encourage civilisation really does keep you interested and make for a consuming passion to rival almost anything.

Populous: The Beginning: Against

Any flaws are really subjective; for example the speed of the game and the amount of work you have to put into it will appeal to some and beget hatred of the genre in others.

Anticipation Rating 70%

This type of game is traditionally associated with the world of the PC, but *Populous* has a reputation that will carry some weight in our world.

Concept Description

Deitying again?

Split The Atom

Alas not a simulation of the latest craze to sweep through the playgrounds (again) but an achingly cute and cacklingly vicious platforming orgy

Yo Yo's Park

Publisher: JVC

Developer: Irem

Release Date: Late Spring

Game Type: Arcade Platformer

PAL Percentage Complete 85%

The Early Verdict

Yo Yo's Park: For

The simple yet effective gameplay, and unabashed cuteness which goes beyond plain cheese and into the realms of cheez...

Yo Yo's Park: Against

May be regarded as a bit twatty by those that know not irony.

Anticipation Rating 75%

Will hit its mark undoubtedly, although it'll be a particularly warped and freakish mark to say the least.

Concept Description

A PlayStation *Bubble Bobble* with a nod to *Rainbow Islands*.

Resurrecting resolutely two-dimensional game styles and then giving them a sly polygon makeover is becoming a bit of a trend with developers nowadays, with mixed but oftentimes successful results. Prime among these is of course *R-Type Delta* from Irem (91% last issue), and flushed with this success they seem to have forcibly taken the controls of the nu-old-school bandwagon and hijacked it for their own needs. Yo-Yo's Park seems to be a re-jigging of classic arcade 8bit platformers such as *Rainbow Islands* and *Bubble Bobble* with the focus very much on super-colourful and terrifyingly cute podgy characters with ping-pong balls for heads bounding about a series of platforms attacking similarly rotund and big-eyed creatures.

The chaps the players control (called Guss and Yodie) go about this by letting off party poppers when they are in close vicinity to the anthropomorphised grapes that wander about the levels, a hopelessly irresponsible act we must emphasise kids, but one which, for the purposes of this game, seems perfectly within the bounds of acceptable behaviour. Doing this makes the enemy thingies dizzy, at which point they can be picked up and thrown at the strangely cheerful bombs which litter the stage, blowing them to saccharine smithereens.

Behind all this havoc is the nefarious Yo-Yo, whose henchmen have taken over a theme park and form the army of gormless goons that must be vanquished by the spherical twosome. At the time of writing his motives remain unclear, but the bottom line is that the puerile pair have to clear sixty-two levels of chaotic goings-on throughout the park, including areas themed around subjects such as Music, Sea, Sky, Jungle, and the infamous Yo-Yo Lounge where the duo have to take on the man himself on his home turf. Scattered throughout these are sixty hostage Gussun-kids (don't ask) who, if rescued in totality, will unlock the intriguing 'Abnormal Mode'. Considering the game is already pretty out there, this will probably be an extremely bizarre feature. We'll of course bring you a full review as soon as JVC sort us out a finished copy.

> "...they can be thrown at the strangely cheerful bombs which litter the stage, blowing them to saccharine smithereens..."

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: One level sees deformed Pac-men after Yodie and Guss' bulbous behinds; the screen has a sea-sick-inducing tendency to see-saw at inopportune moments; visual inspiration seems to come from a packet of Opal Fruits.

You're **AGGRESSIVE**, destructive, **INSENSITIVE** and overly competitive. You're a bad **LOSER** and you're **RUTHLESS**. You don't even care who you wipe out in pursuit of your own agenda. Your habits are **DISGUSTING** and your **ADDICTIVE** nature is **APPALLING**. In fact, you're a **BASTARD** who just never knows when to **QUIT**.

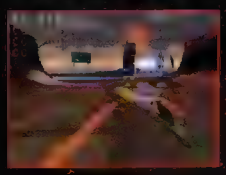
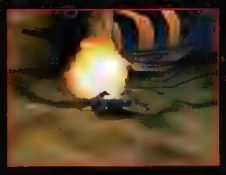
YOU'RE PERFECT!

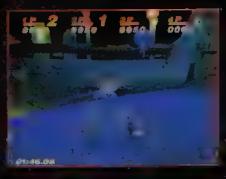
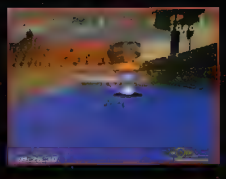
DODGEM arena

"Dodgem Arena is shaping up to be an addictive high-octane pulse-racer." Play Magazine

"Pretty and fast...has plenty under it's belt to nourish the harder-core kind of gamer." Total PlayStation

"Very clever, simple, ultimately addictive and fun. If you can't have even a little bit of fun you're either dead or couldn't organise a piss-up in a brewery." 85% extreme PlayStation

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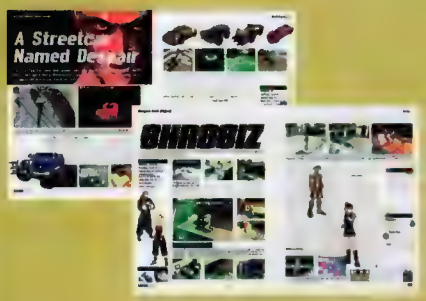

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TEKKEN 2

TOMB RAIDER

GRAND THEFT AUTO

COMMAND & CONQUER

Cunning Stunts

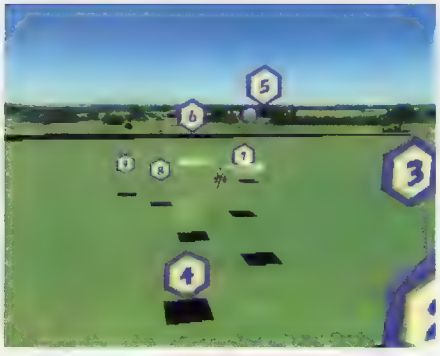
After numerous delays, we've at last been allowed access to one of the most original and gratifying games yet. See now if the other Dave Perry still has his Midas touch for granting golden gameplay to software.

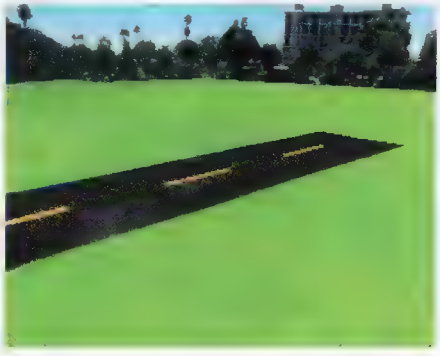
Once the exclusive plaything of well-off Dad types, the remote controlled helicopter looks set to go through a renaissance of popularity (albeit in virtual form) thanks to the long-awaited joys of Shiny's RC Stunt Copter. A near-mythical aura has long surrounded this game – a mere single level taster at ECTS was enough to whip many journalists, such as ourselves, into a kind of anticipatory schoolboy crush on the game. And like all good classroom infatuations, we were enamoured by challenging but joyous playability and cheeky good looks.

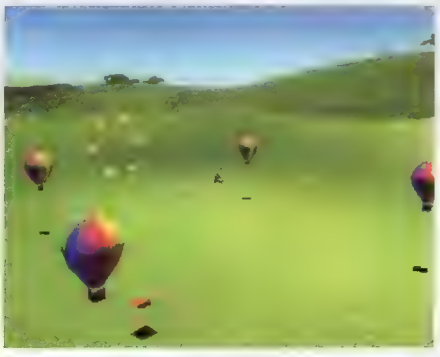
The legend goes that Shiny Entertainment head honcho Dave Perry once splashed out some of his vast fortune on a real-life miniature helicopter, only to cack-handedly smash it into the ground, turning it into so many tiny pieces of brightly coloured plastic. It was only after making this expensive error that the lanky millionaire was struck by genius (again...): a computer game would the ideal location to practice the rather tricky skills required to pilot one of the buzzing machines without danger to self, others or bank balance. RC Stunt Copter is the ultimate fruit of this episode, a game which, unthinkably in the current climate, will in all likelihood be original, fun and successful.

Rotorvation

Before the less enlightened of you turn the page with impatience, thinking 'Urgh, a tedious propellerhead PC flight







Dave Perry Q&A:

We asked the man Perry to elaborate a touch on a few of the more noteworthy aspects of RC Stunt Copter. Here are his characteristically keen replies:

STATION: IT SEEMS GREAT PRIDE IS BEING TAKEN OVER THE ACCURACY AND DETAIL OF THE PHYSICS MODEL INVOLVED IN STUNT COPTER. COULD YOU GIVE A RUN-DOWN, AND HOW THESE ROUTINES BEEN TWEAKED TO AID PLAYABILITY?

DP: Sure thing! The control hinges on the training – which is why we've invested so much time in making sure that people can actually learn how to fly. Upon completion of training the amount of 'help' we offer you is in direct relation to how well you just did. If you scored pretty high in training, we increase the realism of the flight dynamics toward true life physics. This means that the gamer will learn to fly a real radio controlled helicopter whilst having a lot of fun. For example, one of the training lessons is to fly the copter into the broad side of a barn.

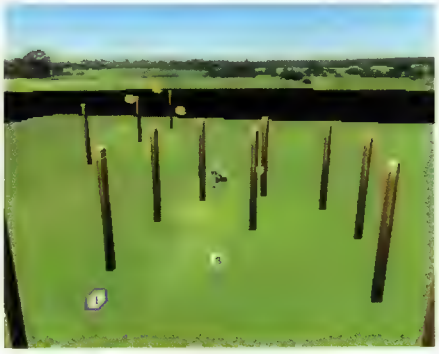
STATION: DO YOU FEEL THAT THE STEEP LEARNING CURVE WAS TOO IMPORTANT TO 'DUMB

LEFT TO RIGHT: The levels aren't just set in pastoral venues, with some events taking place at this beach front location, complete with mini Acropolis; could *you* pick up the cuddly toys with that claw attachment before the nasty-looking lawnmower gets to them?

sim', it must be made clear that the emphasis in RC SC is very firmly focused on the gameplay possibilities engendered by controlling a small vehicle from a distant viewpoint, instead of the traditional first person/cockpit angle most games are based around. A chase view is included to assist with learning how to handle the spindly whirlybird, but the eventual goal is to steer it as in real-life from afar, aligning yourself mentally with its attitude and velocity. Any of you who, when playing a driving game, have tried to manoeuvre your car by watching it on an opponent's side of a split screen may have an inkling of how difficult but satisfying this can be. Stunt Copter, with its added plane of vertical movement, should prove a sterling challenge to your eye-hand co-ordination and spatial awareness.

For those that are unaware, a helicopter is controlled by a combination of inputs: in the real world, the stick between the pilot's legs (or 'cyclic') controls the angle the vehicle's nose is pitched up or down and how far to either side it rolls. Forward movement comes about by tipping the chopper's nose down slightly so that the rotor blades add impetus ahead as well as up (which keeps it hovering). Vertical travel is controlled by the 'collective', which increases the angle of attack of the blades, and hence changes the degree of lift, making the

"...pleasure is obtained not just by achieving goals, but simply through the act of flying..."



DOWN', AS ARGUABLY THE DIFFICULTY INVOLVED WILL PUT OFF MANY MAINSTREAM GAMERS WHO DON'T HAVE THE PATIENCE/DEXTERITY TO MASTER IT?

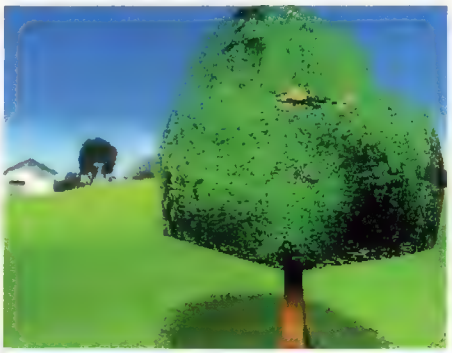
DP: We find the average person takes 20 minutes to fly well. Then they can't set the joypad down. If they do, when they are talking to you, they just keep staring at the joypad. Then they say 'Can I just have one more go'. They often say it gives them the same feeling as *Tetris*, that it was their mistake and they can do better next time.

STATION: THE LEVELS AND TASKS ALL SEEM EMPHASISE THE SMALL SCALE, AND DISTANCE THE GAME FROM OTHER FLYING SIMULATIONS. WAS THIS A CONSCIOUS DECISION?

DP: Most definitely. There's a huge difference in the way you'd fly a real helicopter versus the way an RC helicopter is flown. Stunt abilities (like inverted flight), lack of a pilot in the cockpit, (no need to worry about the pilot blacking out from excessive 'Gs' during some crazy manoeuvres), general control, set this game apart from the rest of the flight sims. → → → → → → → → → → →

Sketchy Details

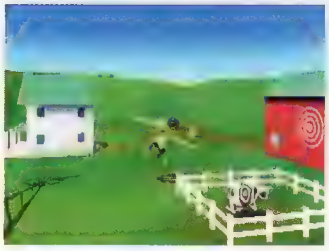
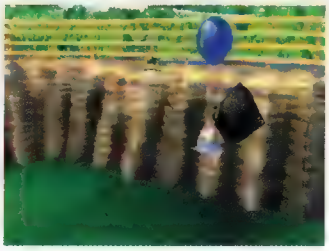
Many of the events haven't yet been coded, but from the look of these sketches they'll continue the left-field comedic theme: Kiddies' party favourite 'Pin the Tail on the Donkey' gets a literal treatment, whilst another section sees the chopper behaving like a good-for-nothing vandal, buzzsawing away at a grumpy old lady's innocent flowerbed as she tries to swat the 'copter with her walking stick. Most interesting of all, though, is the 'Paparazzi-Cam', where the goal is to take snapshots of passing starlets and presumably avoid being battered by some polygonal Sean Penn clone.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: The floating hexagons invoke memories of Pilotwings, the most obvious historical reference point for RC SC; this local flora proves to be an unavoidable hazard; damn those tree-hugging hippies! Catching hold of a kiddy whose balloon is making him float away is the aim at the Fairground.

chopper rise or fall. The little propeller at the back can be sped up or slowed down to make it turn to the left or right. These disparate control surfaces have been elegantly transferred to the twin sticks of the Dual Shock pad: one thumb controls the cyclic functions and the other rudder and collective movement. This is a PlayStation first to our knowledge, as the game relies on the two joystick configuration and would prove darn near impossible to fly with a Luddite D-pad.

From a mainstream gamer's point of view the drawback is the hilariously steep learning curve, with the intrinsically three-

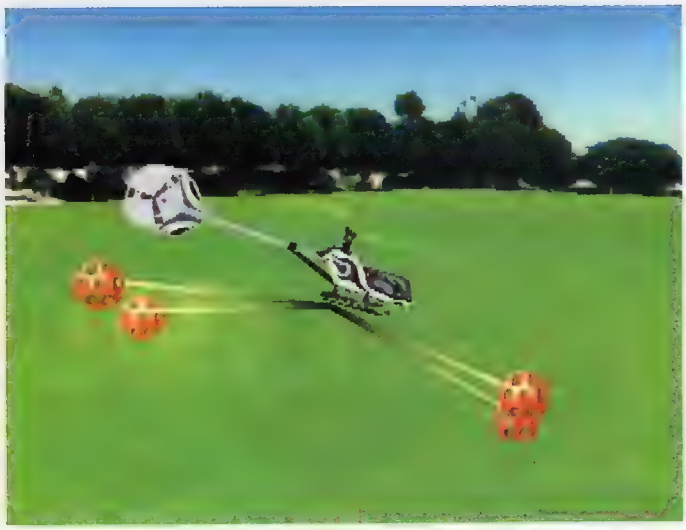



STATION: THE GAME HAS NO CHARACTERS, WILL THIS MAKE IT HARDER TO MARKET, AND HOW WILL YOU AVOID THE SAME MISTAKES BEING MADE THAT SAW *WILD 9* FALL SHORT OF ITS SALES POTENTIAL?

DP: I think there are a couple of things that should make RC Stunt Copter sell well. First, I've been battling a long time to have the game released at a reasonable price. It's a software toy rather than a traditional game, so I think I've been able to convince the publisher to get it out for a retail price of about $29.95 when it hits the shelves in America. This game has been a work of passion for us, and we want as many people to share in the joy that we've had creating it. The second thing is word of mouth. When people play the game, they're usually hooked on the gameplay. I think you'll see it selling consistently for a long period of time, and increasing sales over time as more people 'discover' it.

STATION: AT ECTS THE IDIOSYNCRATIC CHOICE OF MUSIC MADE THE GAME STAND OUT JUST AS MUCH AS ITS UNUSUAL FORM. WILL THIS IDEA OF NON-STANDARD MELLOW MOOD TUNES BE CARRIED OVER INTO THE FINAL VERSION?

DP: Yeah, it will. We just put it in for fun, but the response we had on the music was amazing.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Those spindly outriggers act like stabilisers on your first bike, preventing the chopper blades from hitting the ground disastrously; the ethical standpoint of ramming a cow with a helicopter evades us, but definitely puts a new slant on learning to fly accurately.

dimensional and attitude-sensitive nature of the beast proving almost too much to deal with for a frustratingly long initiation period.

The boon of this uncompromising stance, though, is in the flexibility of movement and ultimately rewarding nature of the game – it takes the development of a genuine skill to excel, rather than following a straightforward spoon-fed progression. This means that pleasure can be gained not just by achieving the game's goals, but through the simple act of flying.

Remote Control Freak

Compounding the already mouth-watering basic game framework are the inspired tasks that you are set from level to level. Initially these include straightforward (almost idiot-proof) goals, such as flying into the side of a barn, undertaking successful take off and landings, flying through a variety of hoops, gates and so forth. Points are not just awarded for achievement of overall aims, but also for flying backwards, accuracy of position and how fast the 'copter was travelling. However it will be the more outlandish 'events' that will ultimately provide the most amusement, and judging from the shots and development sketches we've received the designers have gone far beyond the call of duty (and sanity) to come up with ideas (see boxout and captions).

Add to this a finely-tuned and colourful graphics engine that combines sweetly-drawn polygons with photo-realistic backdrops and you've got a serious contender for Game of the Year. Now all we need is an Airwolf game.

"...like all good classroom infatuations, we were enamoured by its challenging but joyous playability and cheeky good looks..."

LEFT TO RIGHT: The museum section demands you be merciless to Ming, with a comedy boxing glove accessory that would put Nas to shame; doing the Hula takes on an interesting new slant as these hoops must be nimbly navigated.

RC Stunt Copter

Publisher: **Interplay**

Developer: **Shiny Ent.**

Release Date: **April**

Game Type: **RC Flight Sim**

PAL Percentage Complete **75%**

The Early Verdict

RC Stunt Copter: For

Inspired tasks, long-term challenge and above all the yummy way the wee chopper can be flung about.

RC Stunt Copter: Against

Tricky handling and flight characteristics of the 'copter will prove a bit of a handful for most.

Anticipation Rating 80%

A new type of gamer's game that has almost everyone salivating with, well, anticipation really.

Concept Description

Radio controlled helicopter fun with stunts and whacked out tasks.

Tanks For The Memories

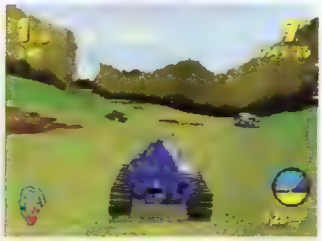
There's no doubting the destructive power of a Sherman, but what do we know about their racing pedigree? Here's your chance to find out.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: That burst of white light at the bottom of your tank will very quickly send you hurtling to speeds of 140mph+. It's what we call a power up and it's very useful; a big stone column and a tank do not make good bedfellows. Don't take on stuff like this. You won't exactly lose, but you won't gain any ground either; this is one of those pictures that we use from time to time to show you how much work and detail goes into your average little game. Impressive, isn't it?

Parking? No problem. When it comes to squeezing into a gap only a couple of inches longer than a car, you need to rely on skill and experience to pull it off. Get behind the controls of your average tank though and your laughing. Well, as long as you've got decent insurance.

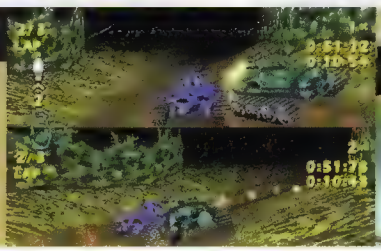
Shifting into reverse and trying to neatly parallel park isn't one of Tank Racer's skillful requirements however. This game relies on the brute strength and top speed of a tank to provide the fun. And fun it is too.

Forget any ideas you might have that this is going to be a plodding game; where it takes three weeks to go from 0-60mph and you've got to be careful that you don't run into anything too fleshy and wearing a friendly uniform. Tank Racer thumbs a nose, rather than a ride, to the world of realism and



Two Player Fantasy

No racing game is complete without the thrill of a two-player mode. Tank Racer offers you many and exciting ways to rub your mate's nose in it. It starts by offering the madness of the split-screen racing game over courses unique to the two-player mode and then throws in the battle option where, using skill and guile, you get to fight in several arenas of death! Cool, huh?



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: El Starto is probably meant to be some kind of joke. Programmers really should stick to 3D engines and not mess with the world of comedy: despite the exclamation mark warning of danger approaching, the tank casually drives on, safe in the knowledge that the glowing shield will protect. For a couple of seconds anyway; with four different attributes to consider, your driving style plays a big part in the choice of tank to pilot. Choose wisely.

guides you down the road of high speed tank battles and mass destruction. Interested now, aren't you?

Any developer worth its salt knows that you have got to be careful that a game like this doesn't just turn into a pointless exercise of easy overtaking and flattening the odd cow. Thankfully, Tank Racer has a lot more depth than you might expect. There are loads of different competitions and courses to enter, two-player modes (including some really nice battle arenas) and even the added extra of some small bonus games that provide a nice diversion and some rewards as you progress through the game moving up through the levels.

We do have one or two concerns with the inherent nature of the gameplay. Controlling the tanks is fine, and the difficulty of the levels and the opponents also seem to keep your on your toes, but there's no real finesse, apparently, to manoeuvring these heaviest of heavy vehicles. If there's a wall in your way, you don't need to slam on the brakes, lock the wheel and pray that you make it round the corner. In a tank, you just turn into the wall and make like it wasn't there.

Except that you can't do this when the course you're racing on takes a turn, even if the only thing stopping you from going straight on is a wooden fence. Now, there is little point in devoting precious amounts of memory into making a track based racer a

"...ignores the inherent problems of realism and guides you down the road of high speed tank battles and mass destruction."

We love the attention to detail, the presentation, the big and bold tanks which move nicely around the colourful 3D landscapes – but most of all we like it because its fun. Pure, unadulterated fun.

Now, you might be thinking that this is starting to sound like a Played and Rated review instead of an early look at the game, but it's not. The game is very nearly completed and apart from the final finishing tweaks we can pretty much suss what we're dealing with here.

free roaming environment, but the skill level and control system need refining to make it feel more like a racer than a tank sim.

Regardless of this minor point, we're looking forward to the mindless excitement you can only get from driving a tank with your eyes closed, and as soon as the completed game rolls off the production line, we'll give you a definite answer as to whether this is going to take you to new heights or make your feel like a tank has just run over your pet cat.

Tank Racer

Publisher: **Grolier Interactive**

Developer: **Glass Ghost**

Release Date: **March**

Game Type: **Tank Racing**

PAL Percentage Complete **80%**

The Early Verdict

Tank Racer: For

Well, you get to race big bold tanks around detailed scenery and run over cows. I don't see how you could resist.

Tank Racer: Against

It's going to be battling against a wide assortment of top-quality racing games from the realistic to the ridiculous.

Anticipation Rating 60%

There's no doubt that this could be a real blast of a game, but how many racing games can one person own before they start to lose interest?

Concept Description

Climb into a tank and drive it as fast as you can.

Krossed Bound Traffic

In the future, we are assured, there will be little brotherly love lost between the various descendants of the human race. Infogrames tackle the *C&C* clone with aplomb.

KKND Krossfire

Publisher: **Infogrames**

Developer: **Beam Software**

Release Date: **June**

Game Type: **Strategy Wargame**

PAL Percentage Complete 70%

The Early Verdict

KKND Krossfire: For

Complex battles and huge arenas.

KKND Krossfire: Against

Dolly the sheep has more individuality.

Anticipation Rating 60%

May be overshadowed by next generation of 3D strategy sims like *Warzone 2100*.

Concept Description

It's *Command & Conquer* with foul looking, hi tech tribes.

Games of the real time war variety have long featured in the staple diet of the PC gamer, a dish served between courses of the latest *Quake* clone and episodes of *Star Trek: Deep Bore Mines*. Their success on the PlayStation, especially Westwood's *Command & Conquer* series, has also been quite considerable, transcending traditional market place boundaries. Everyone likes a bit of strategy now and then, it seems, and so KKND Krossfire comes looking to fit nicely into the PSX market niche.

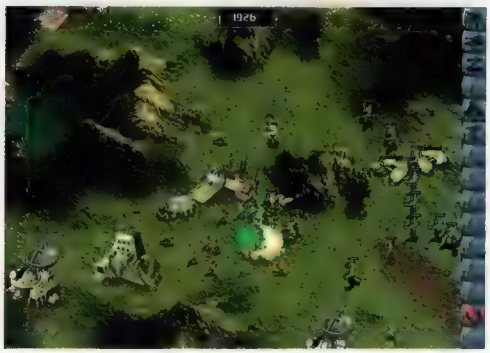
forest or desert terrains though, the levels are based around broken earth confines and futuristic water levels surrounded by lush foliage.

All quite pleasant, considering you'll be spending most of the time trying to kick the living shit out of grotesque and increasingly cunning bastards intent on bringing your money making oil extractions to a halt.

The early version that we've seen speeds up the pace of play by allowing menu bar selection with the shoulder buttons. This will hopefully make two player games more enjoyable, expurgating the stop and start gameplay of competitors. Whether wargame fans will warm to this after the familiar comfort of their preferred sim is a bit of a hot potato – the game is certainly just as complex as others, yet more action based than you'd perhaps expect. Fumble the various clicks of the pad at the vital moment and it could all be curtains for you. The split screen two player mode and inclusion of an interesting co-operative section will make you very excited. If you're a wargame fan, that is.

"...FMV sequences are of superb quality and contain some of the ugliest faces we've seen in a game..."

The FMV mission briefs are of superb quality and have some of the ugliest faces we've ever witnessed in a game. The star turns in this circus of horrors have been created with a system called 'FAMOUS', a technique pioneered and copyrighted by the developers themselves. It's like sickening muppet animatronics with human faces – not what you want to see after a heavy lunch, certainly. There are in depth mission briefings, given by the commander of the squad and you'll notice various buildings and vehicles in game which bear strong resemblance to those of *C&C*: such as troop generators and research centres. Instead of



LEFT TO RIGHT: Building up firm power units and refineries before waltzing in to kill everything in sight is the key to success in most missions: the old fashioned battle scenes look worringly like table top RPGs with metal miniatures as played by sad people.

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Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown
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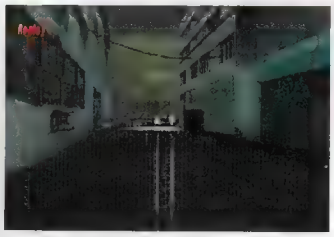
Let's Go Mr Driver

This hotly anticipated PlayStation title comes from the same team as the brilliant *Destruction Derby*. It should make Reflections a truly major league developer.

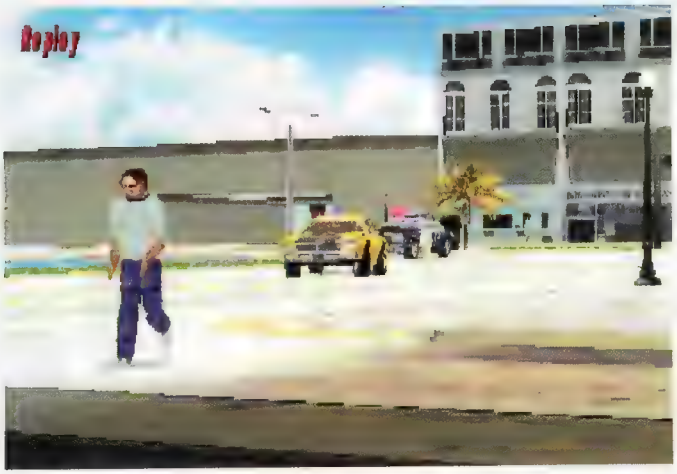


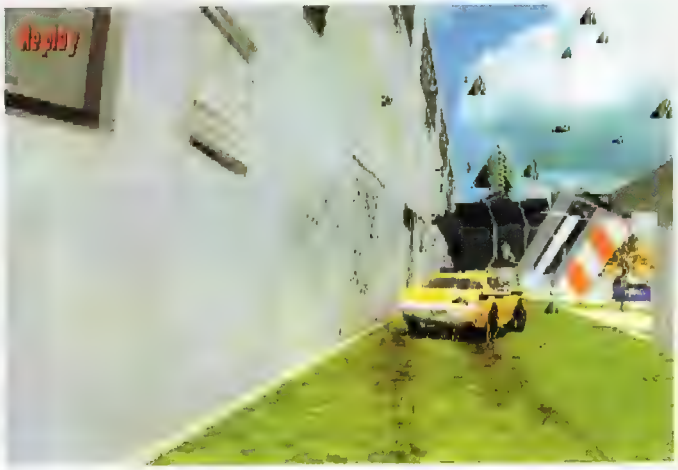
Not only great fun, but at the time of its release, *Destruction Derby 2* was easily the best looking racing game available and earned Reflections much praise for a highly topical mix of gleaming 3D and smash 'em-up racing. The interceding time has seen Reflections concentrating solely on this racing game, learning the ins and outs of the new-found abilities of the PlayStation demonstrated by *Gran Turismo* and *Ridge Racer 4*, as they skidded by on the increasingly busy freeway of the PlayStation racer.

In order to make the game as visually realistic as possible, the team have used video footage and archive photos to design the cityscapes in which the action is contained. Junctions and traffic

Television Tarmac

Seeing as they're featured so prominently in Driver, We've thought up our top three car crashes, chases and smashes from cinematic history. Top of the list is any scene from the *Blues Brothers*, which seemed to involve more carnage and damaged automobiles than any film previously – think glass shattering mall chases and highway spin outs. *Bullitt* couldn't go without a mention, when Steve McQueen did his best to make his vehicle go supersonic, and finally how could anyone neglect the retro mahem of *French Connection*?





LEFT TO RIGHT: This solitary pedestrian is blissfully unaware of the incoming chaos behind him. His prospects don't look too good, quite frankly; when you need to take a short cut, the back alleys and grass verges are perfect for demolishing the scenery and your car. Should you wish to, of course.

lights appear as you drive along, and all in all the whole shebang is highly reminiscent of Atari's top down *Micro Machine* style *APB* arcade game of years ago. *GTA* has been and gone since then, and although Driver similarly focuses on crime, this time you play the good guys rather than the foul mouthed criminal slime of *GTA*.

Driver features both rendered pedestrians and finned American super saloons, and you should also expect rear end smashes and body work littering the roadside in the manner of *Destruction Derby*. The visual design finds its true forte, however, in the well crafted cinematic elements. The replays of *Destruction Derby* and even the mighty *Gran Turismo* could well pale beside the custom camera positioning replays incorporated here. After you've completed a mission you can go back and edit the footage together in true movie style, so you work various angles of that 10ft jump in the air together, and perhaps make believe that you were actually in that car and that your name is, indeed, Steve McQueen.

a stick, and the rest of your bodily parts in a bag. Fans of gangster films will rejoice at the idea of powersliding around the US dodging gunfire and er, 'bustin da ass of perpoitrators'.

Driving in the dark is particularly atmospheric, though. Only the subtle glint of tail lights alert you to oncoming traffic – whether the car ahead is an amicable citizen or a crazy, drug addled pimp on his way work won't be clear until you venture a bit closer and watch the manner of the technique of the driver. You may recall that both *Destruction Derby*s took great care with car physics and gravitational pull – the 'real' gravity of the game, in fact, had to be toned down; the cars moved so fast they were orbiting places which didn't actually exist on the track. Happily, though, the 'real' car physics don't stop you flying through the air at speed in Driver.

Alley-way pursuits are fraught affairs, very tight thoroughfares and plenty of movable objects such as bins and cones make building up top speeds the province of the skilled gamer alone. Expect a review in the coming months, when we will slip into the fantasy world of car chases dimly remembered from youth (the ones we saw on TV, that is) and do our very best to recreate them.

"The replays of *Destruction Derby* and even *Gran Turismo* could well pale beside the replays with custom camera positions featured here"

The macho thrill of speed is enhanced by the artificial intelligence of the other cars – pursuits can involve the player either being chased or chasing. Unsurprisingly, you aren't too popular with the criminal set, who seem to want your head on

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Lens flare and plumes of smoke are particularly well done, but just look at pixel detail on those buildings!; a dangerous car chase, with the police patrol car being bounced off the walls in a zig zag manner; *Chase HQ* style action as you use the replay feature to see exactly how many traffic cones barriers and oil bins you've hit.

Driver

Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: Reflections

Release Date: April

Game Type: Driving Sim

PAL Percentage Complete 85%

The Early Verdict

Driver: For

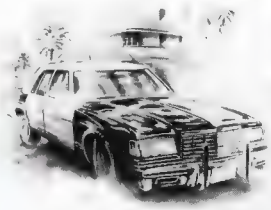
Original Dirty Harry style action.

Driver: Against

Visually too similar to *Destruction Derby*.

Anticipation Rating 94%

Second only to *GT2* as a great racing hope, should give a more mature feel to the genre too we reckon. Baited breath indeed.

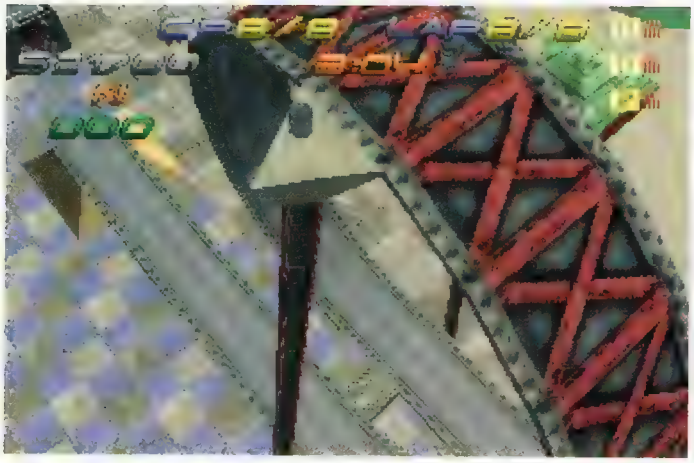


Concept Description

Undercover cops and robbers in chic 70s cool.

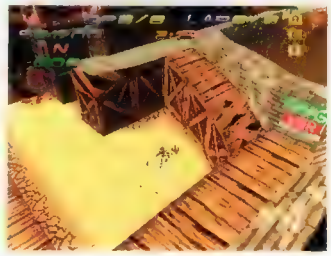
A Streetcar Named Despair

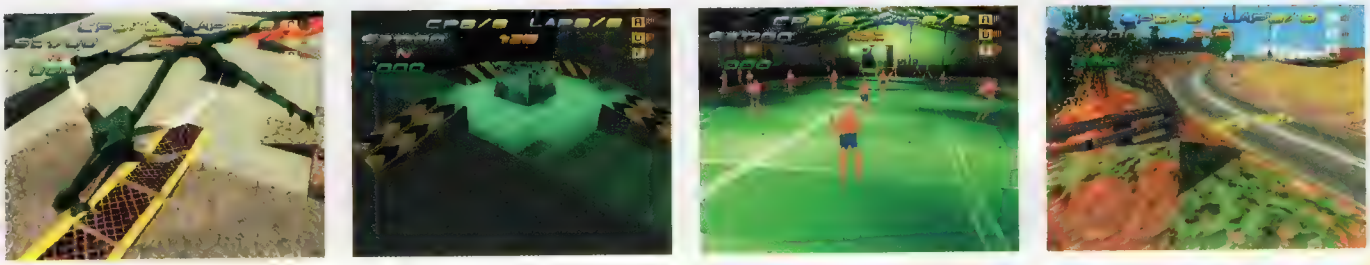
Controversy follows this game like an over-affectionate dog, with many outraged Mary Whitehouse-types appalled by its uncaring lack of apparent morality. 'Good on 'yer son!' we say...



LEFT TO RIGHT: **A bloody great loop-the-loop construction will no doubt be the stage for many failed yet spectacular stunt attempts: your car, the Eagle Mk1, is thoughtfully sprayed a red colour, one assumes this is so the rivers of blood that are bound to run across its bonnet don't muck up the paint job. Nice mohican accessory as well!.**

One reason for playing computer games is to indulge in activities one wouldn't normally get the opportunity to enjoy: beating up ninjas, racing Michael Schumacher, flying an X-Wing and so on are accepted escapist fantasies that your console can provide, but now the armchair psychopaths among you can enjoy the thrills of mowing down pavement-fulls of innocent pedestrians all in the name of silicon gratification. A huge hit on the PC for some time now, it's no surprise that a game based around applied road rage should make its way over to the somewhat more moronic shores of the PlayStation and carve out a bloody niche for itself. An amalgam of the first two non-console versions, Carmageddon is a vehicular combat game where points are amassed for random acts of violence against both hard and soft targets, with thirty other *Mad Max* wannabes in souped up chrome thoroughbreds gunning for one another and the non-automotive underclass across thirty multi-level circuits and arenas. While the purpose of the original games was to run human beings down and turn them to red goo, it's still unsure whether the powers that be at the BBFC and Sony will allow the PSX game to go ahead with this feature intact – they're uneasy





about the idea of Little Johnny empathising with mass-murdering scum and will quite probably demand that the flesh and blood pedestrians are replaced by zombies which spew green goo when they're crushed, the dog-chugging wet-blanket killjoys... Mind you, a similarly-themed game called something like *Actua Crazed Loner In a Tower with a Rifle* probably wouldn't go down quite as well, so maybe they do have a point.

role (which only computer games allow you to do pro-actively) is one step too far, at least where our nation's moral guardians are concerned. Apparently though, the notoriously well-adjusted and heavily-armed denizens of the USA are going to get the unexpurgated version in all of its gory glory, so blood fetishists should keep an eye on their local importing emporium for a fix.

"The physics of a fragile body being tossed about like a rag doll after being run down have also had attention lavished..."

Either way it does open up a new intellectual debate inasmuch that other forms of media, such as books or film, with a bloodthirsty killer as the 'hero' are more or less legitimate (see *American Psycho, Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer, Man Bites Dog*), but it seems that actually taking on the

Tarmac Terrors

It'll come as no surprise that the fighting vehicles in Carmageddon are unusual as well as lethal. Here's but a taster...

A dangerous and flimsy bean-can fit only for hippies and primary-school teachers it may be, but in this game a 2CV is a twisted and customised parody of its actual self, with a nasty shin-shredding lawnmower blade stuck on its front bumper.

Possibly infringing a number of long-standing copyrights, this cardboard box-crushing specialist car will create feelings of nostalgia as well as pain and discomfort. Just don't try and ape Hutch's 'slide across the bonnet' manoeuvre like he does in the opening credits.

Death Race 1999

The action can take place along urbanised city streets, across a crowded ski piste or through a medievally-inspire stunt track, to name but a few of the locations that have been programmed thus far, replete with the now expected destructible landscapes which can be smashed to reveal the concealed areas and switches that must be found to access secret bonus levels. To travel this blood-strewn path the player takes the wheel of a classic man-mangler, the Eagle Mk1. SCi describe the driving physics as 'state of the art' and boast of a damage deformation system that allows bodywork to visually dent and crush upon impact – a feature which they intriguingly reckon is 'yet to be seen on the PlayStation'. Ahem? What about *Colin McRae Rally? TOCA 2? Destruction Derby*, for God's sake? Get yer shit correct, SCi, or a hard rain of honesty is gonna fall on you. The all-important physics of a fragile body being tossed about like a rag doll after being run down by a speeding hunk of metal has also had much attention lavished upon it, and each model possesses full polygon legs, heads and arms that can be bashed about and then ripped away with admirable realism.

Car-nage!

Armour protection, engine performance and defensive systems can be systematically upgraded as play unfolds to boost your mayhem potential, while a training mode teaches beginner drivers the ropes before unleashing them on the unsuspecting world. Alongside the standard indiscriminate killing game there's a more considered range of variant play modes, including a knockout Check Point race where the final car in the field to pass one is eliminated, Terminal Tag which is like a petrol-driven version of British Bulldog and requires you to touch all the other cars before a time limit expires, while for grudge matches a split-screen option lets two players battle for supremacy. We'll bring you a more comprehensive update once more game code has been constructed, and of course update the news as to what the legal repercussions may be.

Carmageddon

Publisher: SCi

Developer: In-House

Release Date: May

Game Type: Driving/Splat Sim

PAL Percentage Complete 50%

The Early Verdict

Carmageddon: For

Glorious Political Correctness-baiting nihilism, backed up by a good pedigree on the PC.

Carmageddon: Against

Iron Maiden are responsible for the soundtrack, and it will only involve zombie-splatting.

Anticipation Rating 60%

Might not set the world alight like on the other formats, and could well be emasculated by censors. Bound to be a giggle, though.

Concept Description

Much like a simulation of Oxford's hellish one-way system taken to the next logical step.

On A Wing And A Prayer

JVC take to the skies with a flight simulator to beat them all. Realistic manoeuvres, authentic instruction – will the fun never end?

Wing Over 2

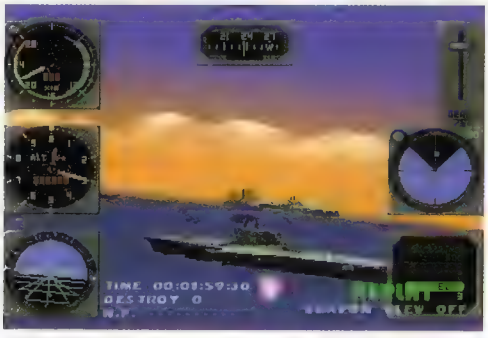
Publisher: JVC

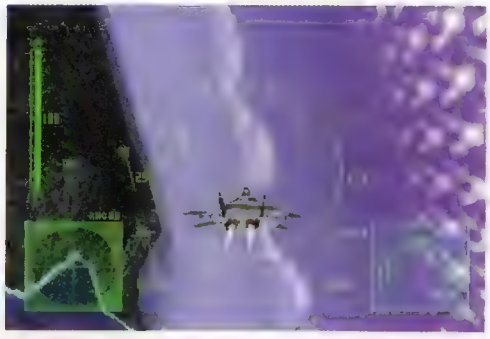
Developer: Beluga Computer

Release Date: October

Game Type: Flight Sim

PAL Percentage Complete **50%**





LEFT TO RIGHT: The replay option will allow you to store your greatest flying moments on a memory card, to show your mates later!; the clouds ripple, the sun blinds, the water laps – the level of detail in Wing Over 2 is out of this world!

The Early Verdict

Wing Over 2: For

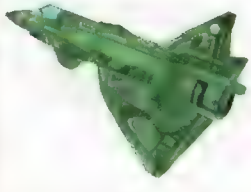
Everything has been made as authentic as possible with in-flight voice training and 26 aircraft to master.

Wing Over 2: Against

The number of dials and HUD displays on-screen may put off players looking for a more instantaneous blast.

Anticipation Rating 70%

Some games go for quick thrills, others attempt to give you a realistic experience. Wing Over 2 goes for the latter – it should drive flight fans crazy!



Concept Description

Ultra-realistic flight sim with 26 aircraft, where earning cash means flying snazzy planes!

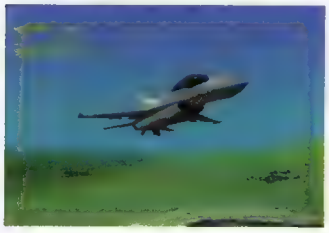
The flight simulator is a strange breed of game. They fall into two categories: the arcade-style shoot 'em-up with exaggerated movement, power-ups and levels to blast your way through; or the realistic portrayal of flight with dials, HUD displays, objectives and a confusing array of controls. The trouble with the latter is that a large section of the potential gameplaying audience can be alienated by the information overload.

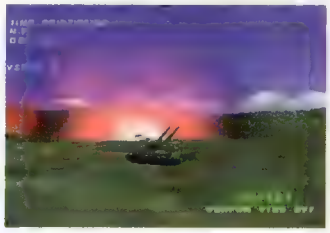
JVCs Wing Over 2 seems to have aimed for a point halfway between these two poles! This game will teach you how to fly with authentic instruction, real manoeuvres and in-flight voice tutoring while retaining a more informal feel by using Manga cartoon style characters.

The basic idea is to pay your way to the top of the flight school by completing missions and earning hard cash. The ultimate goal is to escort the Presidential jet through enemy air space, but the journey to this point is a long one – and is packed with some of the best aircraft in the world! There are 26 'planes in all and each has its real life instrument panel and realistic handling. You earn the right to pilot the next aircraft in the list through exemplary flying, so you'll need a very steady hand! Of course, the game will be both analog and Dual Shock joypad compatible for the most realistic feedback.

"...the game will be both analogue and Dual Shock joypad compatible for the most realistic feedback..."

The flight simulation has never been done particularly well on the PlayStation – in fact, a decent game doesn't even come to mind. Let's hope that Wing Over 2 goes a long way to putting this right. It certainly has the potential: there are some great visual effects and all the information and statistics that you would expect are thrown in, but at the same time efforts have been made to a retain a strong element of fun. Watch out for a full review at a STATION near you soon!





Full Sheepskin Jacket

They thought it was all over! *Premier Manager* had beaten off the competition, but wait! Looks like it's Keegan Vs the FA... again.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: During each game you are treated to some quality 3D visuals and a running commentary by Brian Moore; the Premiership, the three other leagues and the Conference can be accessed at any time; the transfer window is where players can be bought and sold. £14m for big Duncan – Gullit's 'avin' a right laarrf.

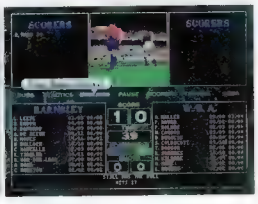
Success, success and even more success – a brief description of Eidos' performance over recent years. Most notably, the company has given birth to the industry's leading heroine, and with the *World League Soccer* titles, is about to competently challenge the stranglehold Electronic Arts has kept on the football market for a considerable length of time. In the realm of soccer management, Eidos' staple on the sprawling PC platform has cornered the market in the much the way Gremlin have on the PlayStation – the three instalments of *Championship Manager* have conquered all that dared to get in the way. With the experience accrued from this title and the immeasurable depth of its financial pockets, Eidos is now attempting to bludgeon its way into the PlayStation market and open up the competition once again.

FA Manager is licensed by the FA so you can expect to find every player in the four leagues and the Conference division represented with authentic player attributes, contracts and statistics. The cream of foreign talent also make appearances, but all this is nothing compared to the programmers' signing of Brian Moore. The legendary commentator, who retired after the '98 world cup, makes a welcome return to the microphone; offering his sometimes prosaic, sometimes poetic, observations upon the 3D action that unfolds during each game. With a whole range of tactics, formations and varying playing styles for you to toy with as well as a complete range of ground improvements and contract negotiating, there can be no doubting the seriousness of the assault Eidos are launching. It promises to be a veritable feast of football decision making.

"... authentic player attributes, contracts and statistics. The cream of foreign talent ... and Brian Moore."

Shifting The Goal Posts

FA Manager offers the wannabe football manager the chance to test his managerial skills and cunning financial prowess beneath the intense spotlight of impatient PLC directors and ruthless media criticism. You are given total control, or so you are told, to buy the players you want, play the team you want and frankly



FA Soccer Manager

Publisher: Eidos

Developer: Krisalis

Release Date: March

Game Type: Footie Man. Sim

PAL Percentage Complete 70%

The Early Verdict

FA Soccer Manager: For

Like every good simulation of this kind, there are statistics galore. Eidos have chucked in enough official stuff to render the brain incapable of acknowledging a world outside of football.

FA Soccer Manager: Against

Only hard-core football fanatics will find any appeal in a game like this. Action-packed is not a term you'll often find being aimed in this direction and without any knowledge of the sport itself, beginners will find it a terrible struggle.

Anticipation Rating 85%

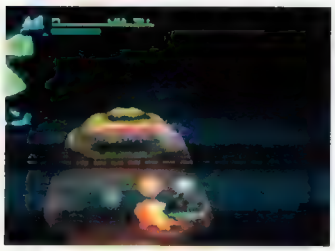
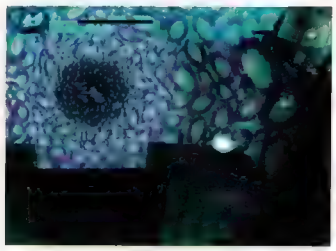
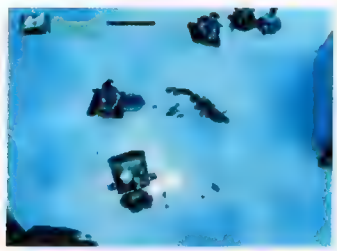
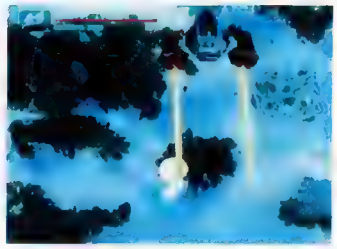
Eidos are holding the reigns, the FA licence gives it kudos and *Premier Manager* looks out of form. Put a monkey on it, it's a dead cert.

Concept Description

Buy the team, train the team, see the team play.

Retromental?

In what seems like a resurgent phase for the trusty shoot 'em-up Psygnosis throw their old-fashioned hat into the ring.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: The remnants of the apocalyptic smart bomb fade, leaving only charred and smoking remains; not a bad case of fungal infection but an end-of-level warp gate kind of thing; one powerup is this green death ray that sweeps the ground underneath the ship, which is ironically less effective than the standard bombs; twin streaks of nasty laser death almost pluck the plucky alien-loathing hero from the sky. Step lively mate!

Retro Force

Publisher: Psygnosis

Developer: In-House

Release Date: 12th March

Game Type: Shoot 'em-up

PAL Percentage Complete 75%

The Early Verdict

Retro Force: For

Unpretentious.

Retro Force: Against

The idiosyncratic choice of colour palette is like a club foot dragging, while the action lacks the zing of recent retro-styled shooters. A little overpriced possibly.

Anticipation Rating 25%

It's not going to set the world alight, especially if the rather glaring fundamental flaws aren't addressed.

Concept Description

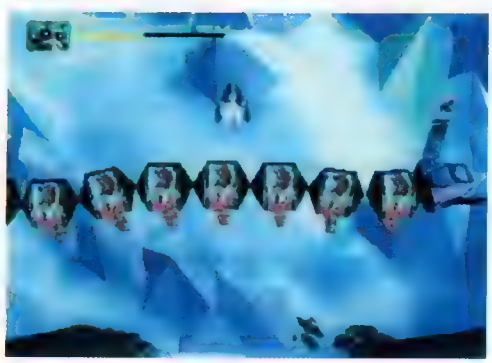
An unreconstructed blaster that's seen a lot of UK Gold.

While the nineties-style horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em-up stakes have been rather conclusively sewn up by the twin hydra of *Einhander* and *R-Type Delta*, the vertically-moving equivalent is still open to all-comers. In a surprise move, Psygnosis has taken up this particular baton with *Retro Force*, a game moulded in the finest traditions of progressive blasters and with what one assumes is an ironically-inspired name. After choosing from one of four Nintendo-esque pilots (the heroic Paris Tetsuo, dashing Hawtin Haydar, Pi – a three-foot tall blue cat – and Sinclair, a fifties-era robot) you are thrust headlong into the fray against the ever-reliable marauding alien force.

Alongside the standard and infinitely available weaponry your ship can call upon a screen-scouring smart bomb and an increasing number of powerups that augment the initially weedy laser cannon by splitting its fire or turning it into a swathing lance of crackling destruction. The invading forces consist of ever-so-slightly derivative TIE fighter clones and lumbering tanks, alongside the requisite big-arse boss ships that bracket the levels. At this point in the game's development a few key animations are still missing, so taking out one of these guardians isn't yet greeted by an explosion, just a screen freeze before the next stage begins. Also the powerup crystals that float about after destroying certain enemies look a little too much like the energy bolts that get fired your way, being the same shape and bluey colour; a problem amplified on the snowy ice planet levels which are (you guessed it) predominantly light blue in hue. Nonetheless these problems are bound to have been ironed out by the time of the game's release, which will come with an optimistic £34.99 price tag.

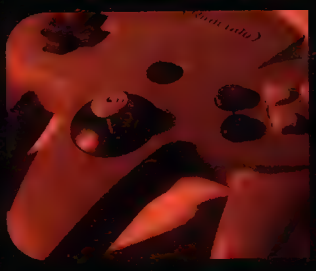
"...The invading forces consist of ever-so-slightly derivative TIE fighter clones and lumbering tanks alongside the requisite big-arse boss ships that bracket the levels..."

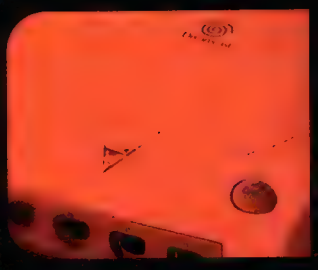
The action is predominantly viewed from the time honoured birds-eye angle, but the full polygon presence of each object allows the camera to sway and shift regularly, giving a fresh perspective on things. Attacking baddies either swarm in on the airborne plane or lurk about at ground level, requiring either swift and direct laser-boltage or the tossing of bombs towards the deck, aimed with the help of a tracking reticule that signifies where the munitions will fall.

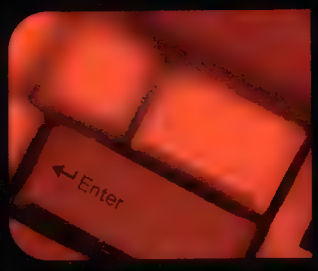


TOTAL CONTROL

TAKING MULTI-FORMAT GAMING TO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM







ISSUE FOUR

THREE NEW GAMES FOR MARIO IN 1999

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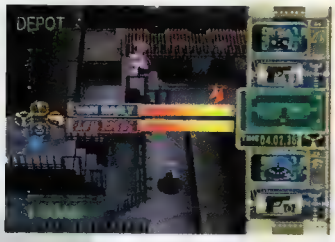
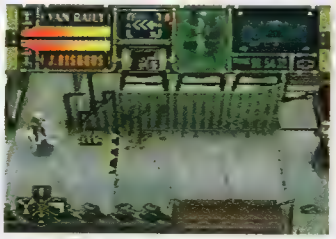
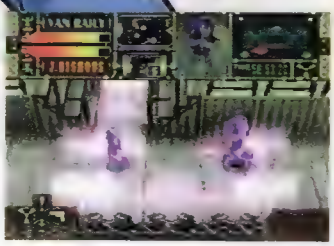
It's A Dog's Life

Being sneaky is a part of human nature – and to prove our point Konami have created this little puzzler to tax even the creepiest of people.







Trap Runner

Publisher: Konami

Developer: Racdym

Release Date: March

Game Type: 3D Action Puzzle

PAL Percentage Complete 80%

Setting traps is not funny. Innumerable wild animals get caught by horrible little snares and lose legs and things or worse. Stick some outrageously Manga-esque characters in a game, build up a 3D maze-like environment and then make their only means of attack the setting of traps, however, and all of a sudden it become riotous entertainment. Ah, the fickle world of videogames.

But we're being a bit harsh here, and it's time to dismount the horse of high morality. Videogames aren't supposed to reflect reality, arguably they exist to provide escapism, along with a healthy dose of challenge. Trap Runner isn't some sort of Satanic device set to ruin the minds of young children. Essentially it's one of those classically simple ideas that are incredibly complicated to master.

"...the exploding trap provides the odd giggle – blow your opponent into a thousand pieces, for ultra-cool try poisonous gas..."

A Load Of Old Clap Trap

The gameplay revolves around setting the various traps that you have in your possession in order to be rid of an unwary opponent, whilst remaining relatively unscathed yourself. Choose from the exploding trap, which provides the odd giggle as the other character is blown into a thousand pieces, or perhaps go for the poisonous gas trap for that ultra-cool *Mission: Impossible* feeling. And when you have acquired the knack of selecting the appropriate trap you can then expand upon the theme and set a series of traps for maximum effect. People of a devious nature will love this game.

The only serious reservation that comes to light when you sit down and start playing Trap Runner is that the control system seems overly complicated for a game of this type, and the general pace of events doesn't inject you with the necessary mind-sharpening fear – you never really feel cornered and ready to act out of desperation. We're sure the usual tightening up that occurs in every game will solve these kind of problems to a greater or lesser degree, but watch out for it in Played and Rated to determine whether it will take its place as a landmark or landmine in game history.

The Early Verdict

Trap Runner: For

It's got the right mixture of action and strategy to give all sorts of gamers the buzz that they're looking for.

Trap Runner: Against

There seems to be a plodding nature to the proceedings that might get better with time and as you get more involved with the game.

Anticipation Rating 40%

Bit of an unknown quantity really, not really big marketing potential, but could shift a large number of units.

Concept Description

Set traps and kill people.

LEFT TO RIGHT: **Despite the useful looking map and all the other on screen details, we still managed to walk into one of those explosive traps; The helpful arrows used in conjunction with the map mean that you'll never lose sight of your opponent – but he will never lose sight of you either.**

If The Kids Are United

The often terrifying world of the under-fives gets it's own game at last, and potty time will never be the same again

LEFT TO RIGHT: **Astride the loyal pooch Spike, Tommy chases after the grumpy goose. Watch it son, he could break your arm!; ponytailed harridan Angelica is Tommy's nemesis throughout the game.**

Saturday mornings just wouldn't be the same without the animated mischief of the Rugrats interrupting Zoe Ball's increasingly tiresome histrionics. The antics of Tommy, Chuckie et al are as popular with grown-ups as sprogs thanks to the clever bi-level approach of the series – gently satirising adult life whilst retaining high entertainment value for small, undeveloped people. A full-length Hollywood movie is also on the horizon, making the appearance of a game no great surprise, and while this is not a direct tie-in, it should no doubt ride the coat-tails of the film to financial glory.

You Dirty Rugrat

The main meat of Rugrats is a 3D Action/Adventure type thang augmented by a surprisingly wide range of cutesy sub-games, with the overarching task being a search for the pieces of Tommy's Reptar puzzle. Starting off in the Pickles' family abode, you control the diminutive adventurer as he waddles about the house, with certain rooms leading to the various tasks he must complete to gather the scattered pieces. These span from navigating a path through a hazardous supermarket, avoiding the trampling feet of careless clerks, racing the dastardly Angelica through the house to the cookie jar, rushing around the garden collecting Easter eggs and searching for the cantankerous Grandpa's false teeth in a maze, which have been stolen by Spike the dog. Victory in each opens up a new clutch of games, which can be attempted in the order of your choosing. Later levels include a *Rampage*-type affair, which sees the player taking control of the fearsome scaly titan, Reptar, as he levels a city. There's also a rather tidy crazy golf game that can have up to four weeny players competing for glory along the windmill-strewn fairways.

"The sheer variety of challenges and puzzles will suit youngsters who have had their attention spans sapped by too many E-numbers..."

Everything comes packaged with the trademark Fisher Price music and sound effects provided by series creator Mark Mothersbaugh to complete the picture. The sheer variety of challenges and puzzles will suit youngsters who have had their attention spans sapped by too many E-numbers, and should hopefully even provide some light entertainment for the most austere older players.

Rugrats

Publisher:	THQ
Developer:	n-Space
Release Date:	Mid March
Game Type:	3D Action/Adventure
PAL Percentage Complete	50%

The Early Verdict

Rugrats: For

It's an endearing reproduction of the 'Rats world, and boasts an eclectic mix of sub-games.

Rugrats: Against

Aimed squarely at kiddies and arguably a bit too rough-hewn, graphically speaking.

Anticipation Rating 50%

Should do well with the growing ranks of new post-toddlers that have their own PSX, especially piggybacking on the film's kudos.

Concept Description

Knee-high *Tomb Raider*.

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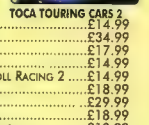
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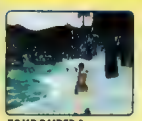
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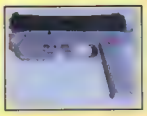

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Played and Rated

[58] – Metal Gear Solid [64] – Eliminator [65] – Rally Cross 2 [66] – Live Wire! [67] – Poy Poy 2 [68] – SMALL REVIEWS: Lost World, Pro Pinball, Total Drivin', Resident Evil 2 (Dual Shock) [70] – Twisted Metal 3 [72] – Africa Rally [73] – Street Fighter Zero 3 [74] – Ehrgeiz

Slip Inside My Sleeping Bag...

The final ratings in STATION are based around your trusty friend, the percentage mark. Listed below is a guide of how to interpret these scores and what they mean to you, the PSX massive.

95-100%

A towering colossus of a game that bestrides the world like a digital titan. Almost perfect in every respect, all PlayStations should be graced with its disc-shaped presence. A bit like waking up to find Gail Porter sharing your sleeping bag.

90-94%

A near-classic that virtually everyone will adore, although it's a little shy of being regarded as a hallowed all-time favourite by all and sundry. Much akin to driving down a deserted Autobahn in a Ferrari 355 with Ed Rush on the stereo.

80-89%

Definitely a strong game, but individual tastes may start to dictate whether it's personally well-regarded. It's a cliché, but fans of the genre will love it. The videogame equivalent of a Wispa Mint, more or less.

70-79%

A game falling into this category will be a good title, don't get me wrong, but there will usually be at least one major flaw that prevents it from achieving greatness. Kind of like the last Prodigy album.

60-69%

Definitely on shaky ground now, with at least several aspects that are weak in some way. Still playable but definitely lacking that certain edge which sorts the men out from the boys. Most similar to finding one of those blackened cornflakes in your bowl of Frosties.

50-59%

We're now in the realms of the unbuyable, with multiple slack features that will grate the patience of anybody. Probably cobbled together, it evokes feelings similar to watching *Bang! Bang! It's Reeves and Mortimer...*

40-49%

A lesson in 'How Not To Do Things', this game will be frankly laughable, and the fact will have been obvious to the developers from a very early stage. A case of *The Avengers* syndrome for sure.

20-39%

A game achieving this lowly rating falls into the category of a deliberate and knowing deception that must have been foisted upon an unsuspecting public in full knowledge that it was shoddily inadequate. Only something like the notorious *Rise of the Robots* could hope to fail this spectacularly.

0-19%

Basically something that doesn't even qualify as a game for whatever reason, being so inept that it's not actually possible to play it. Cryo's now-cancelled *Atlantis*, hang your head in shame.

Trust the Triple A

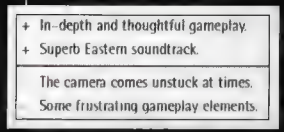
The Triple A badge is our personal guarantee of software excellence, and acts as a symbol of all that is good and true in the world. Only the most pea-brained of individuals could hope to dislike a game of this calibre, as it will boast razor-sharp gameplay, brain-melting visuals and epoch-rivalling lastability. We've all got tattoos of the Triple A symbol on our forearms, y'know.

Talking Pages

Here is a quick guide to what to expect on the pages of STATION's Played and Rated section.

SCORE
This is what you're looking for. This is the country's most respected PlayStation magazine score: 100% unofficial, 100% unbiased, 100% honest!

PLUS/MINUS
Two reasons why you should consider this game, two reasons why you should be wary.


+ In-depth and thoughtful gameplay.
+ Superb Eastern soundtrack.
- The camera comes unstuck at times.
- Some frustrating gameplay elements.

Played and Rated Index

58 Metal Gear Solid
The avant-garde fag-smoking toilet-skulking sneak 'em-up finally gets its PAL release.

64 Eliminator
Psygnosis revert back to their nasty habits again with this limp blaster.

65 Rally Cross 2
A mud-chugging racer that can't but fail to improve on the original.

66 Live Wire!
Pre-millennial update of an old-school grids 'n paint favourite.

67 Poy Poy 2
Unmitigated cruelty and pitiless log-throwing take centre stage in this multi-tap classic.

68 Small Reviews
LOST WORLD
PRO PINBALL
TOTAL DRIVIN'
RESIDENT EVIL 2 (DUAL SHOCK)
Malignant dinosaurs, steel balls, cheap cars and shocked zombies a go-go.

70 Twisted Metal 3 [IMPORT]
A case of road rage gone all legit, fresh from the spiritual home of random homicide.

72 Africa Rally [IMPORT]
Kid's stuff racer that should be on a GameBoy.

73 Street Fighter Zero 3 [IMPORT]
Ryu and chums have it out yet again. C'mon lads, it's not worth it!

74 Ehrgeiz [IMPORT]
A lateral take on the beat 'em-up that sees the return of some *FFVII* stars.

METAL GEAR SOLID

We've already previewed the impenetrable Jap version as you well know, but the UK release is in plain Queen's English and has several enhancements that didn't appear in the original game. It's still managing to surprise and impress us, so skulk in the shadows over to page 58 for our gravel-voiced opinion.

EHRGEIZ

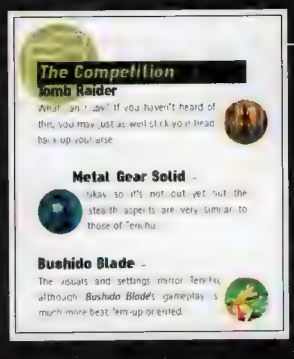
A truly three-dimensional fighting arena and some lithe-limbed graphics make this Squaresoft oddity one to shell out for at your local dodgy import den. The re-appearance of heroic Cloud and villainous Sephiroth should allay those of you with *FFVII* withdrawal symptoms as well.

TWISTED METAL 3

Automotive mayhem is a constant on our beloved grey box, and the month of March is no exception as we see the third game in this popular series swerve wildly into our import section. But can it retain the mangled momentum of the previous instalments, or end up as just so much roadkill?

ICONS

Does the game utilise any peripherals: steering wheel, Dual Shock pad, memory card etc.

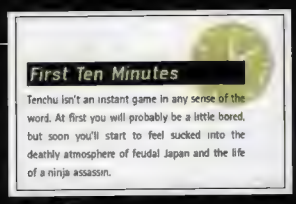


THE COMPETITION

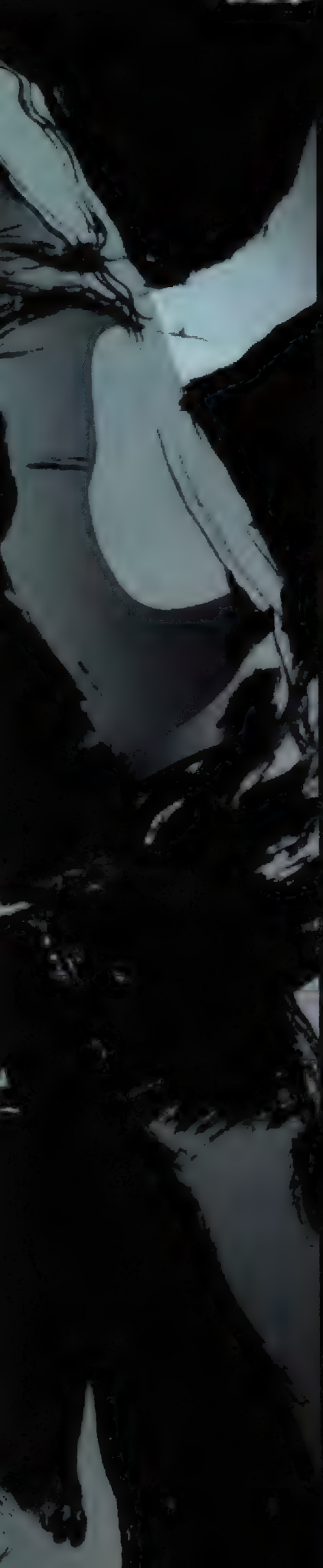
Life is full of choices. Whatever the review score, there may be an alternative to the game in question, and this is where you will find it.

FIRST TEN MINUTES

Do first impressions really count? Is it love at first sight or instant repulsion? Find out here.

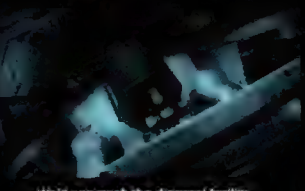

First Ten Minutes
Tenchu isn't an instant game in any sense of the word. At first you will probably be a little bored, but soon you'll start to feel sucked into the deathly atmosphere of feudal Japan and the life of a ninja assassin.

METAL GEAR SOLID



Snake! You're needed for an anti-terrorist mission and 'tactical espionage action'. Chat up women, sneak around like a cat and play the all-round superhero in Konami's best game ever.

The nuclear weapons disposal facility on Shadow Moses Island



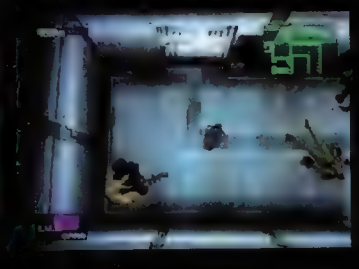
We'll approach the disposal facility by sub.

To talk about Metal Gear Solid as if it were a shocking new event would be wrong - it's been around for a fair few months for import fans willing to play through Japanese text or devious enough to find an American version (which Konami went to great lengths to stop importers selling).

Finally, though, this landmark game has graced our offices in finished PAL finery and although we usually have some qualms about English conversions, Metal Gear Solid surpasses all our hopes. The screen borders are suitably discreet, and there is no discernible slowdown, so any reservation you may have about buying this transformation of the NTSC code should be dispensed forthwith – especially given the unique features added for the UK release.

For those of you who missed our in depth preview (issue 3), or who have somehow managed to avoid the omnipresent hype elsewhere in the PlayStation press, here's a brief idea of the proceedings. You take the role of ex-military character Solid Snake, a Clint Eastwood sound-alike recruited by a government agency to stop a gang of terrorists from detonating a nuclear device, whilst at the same time protecting the scientist hostages they are holding captive. Unfortunately for you, the core members of the terrorists' leadership previously worked for your old group, Fox Hound, and therefore have familiar faces and individual skills which exceed your own, now further enhanced by stealth enhancing drugs of an occult nature. The arch enemy in all of this is the intriguingly named Psycho Mantis, a villain with psychic abilities and truly demonic intentions.

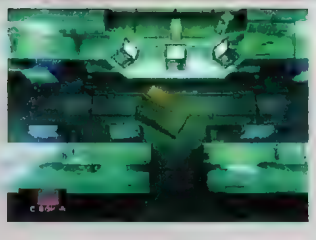
And so it transpires that you find yourself upon a solo mission to infiltrate their base and find the nuclear Metal Gear technology, *Mission: Impossible* or Bond style. Initial entrance to the stronghold must be achieved via the ➜



Situation Sneaking

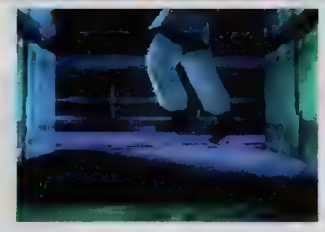
CORRIDOR CORNERING

When you push yourself against a wall and approach a corridor junction or right angle, the camera swings round to provide a full frontal view – perfect for planning jumps on unsuspecting guards.



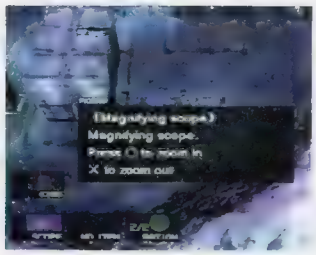
BOX CLEVER

Boxes are useful hiding places for either ducking under or actually getting in. If you do the latter, though, you run the risk of being moved about by strangers and pissed on by canines!



UNDER THE WORLD

Air vents, or anything you can crawl under to avoid detection, are invaluable if you've been spotted and need to wait for 30 seconds or so to lessen the guards' suspicion.



Metal Gear Solid

Publisher: Konami

Developer: Konami of Japan

Release Date: Feb 26th

Game Type: Sneak 'em-up

No of Players: One

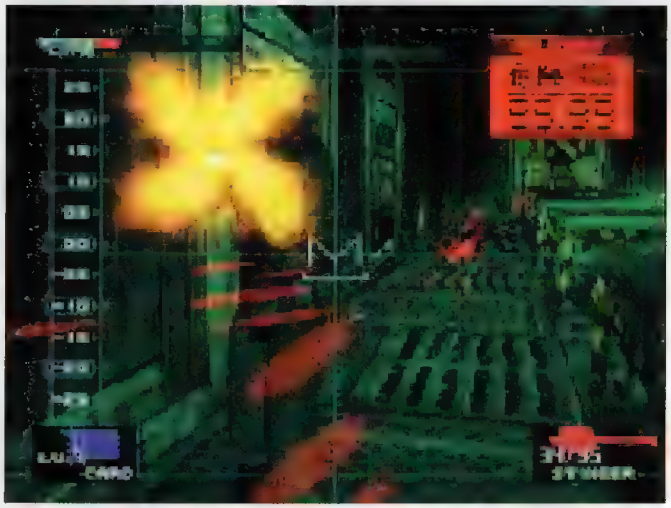
Price: £44.99

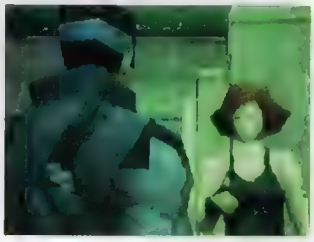
water, and you begin the game in scuba gear, unarmed save for your pager. This inaugural atmosphere is outstandingly tense as you gently sneak into the base and begin to infiltrate the area, and then the credits roll. This is just one of the cinematic effects that make this game something special – the camera angles throughout are intelligently changed to reach out and draw one into the narrative, and whereas *Resident Evil* used the classic top down horror movie perspectives of Hitchcock and Kubrick, the directorial style displayed here is more akin to Brain Depalma – at any time a first person view is selectable, and kicks in automatically when you start to crawl through air vents or underneath large objects. Particularly striking moments include lying on your belly while two sets of soldier boots stomp around within inches of you, all enhanced by the tremble of the Dual Shock pad in your hands should you be detected.

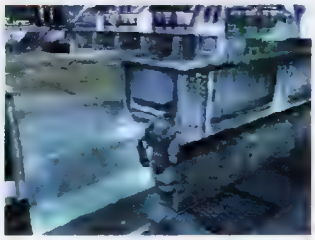
Sneaking around the complex must be pixel perfect at times, keeping a watchful eye upon the ever present security cameras and searchlights as well as the vigilant guards. So fundamental to success is the intelligent employment of stealth tactics that a Tron-like training mode is available to hone those tip-toe techniques to the max. It's like the driving lesson tutorials in *Gran Turismo*, except that there are no awards to be obtained just by passing a test!

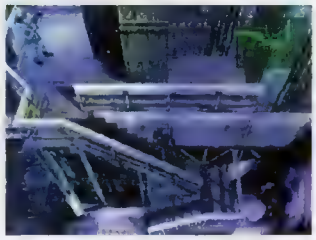
SOLID SNAKE

You take the role of the gruff, smooth talking hero Solid Snake, a hybrid of James Bond, McGuyver and Inspector Gadget, in a totally serious military outfit, of course. Once a key member of Fox Hound, Snake chose to retire early and conceal a dodgy past, with which his boss threatens blackmail before tailing off into ambiguous chit chat. A truly unreconstructed male, he'll also try and chat up anything remotely female. Cheeky beggar.



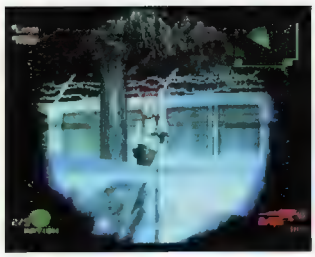


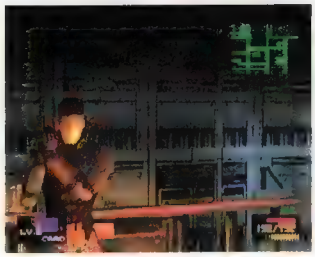


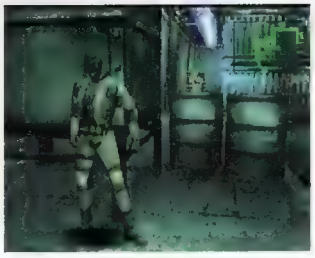


Compatibility

BOTTOM LEFT TO RIGHT: Snake hides from the security camera by using its blindspot; to the left are roaming searchlights – step into them and the nearby guards will be alerted and it's virtually impossible to escape unscathed; the scale of each stage never fails to amaze – you can see everywhere and the depth of this camera angle demonstrates this.





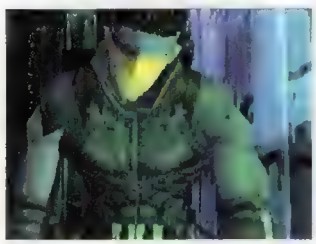


The first few plays will be difficult affairs. Unarmed, you'll frequently be accosted by well equipped guards who are sensitive to your every move or sound. The bare handed combat option is available for the ambitious – it may be feasible to grab one of the guards from behind and, if you're lucky, break their neck by repeatedly stabbing the relevant button, although avoiding detection is likely to be the popular choice – and one which is actually more engaging than the out and out blasts of the past. As mentioned above, the pad will shake if your presence has been heeded (like a jelly on a sex toy!), but if merely cautious, an exclamation mark will appear above a sentry's head as he exclaims 'what was that?' or the slightly comical 'whose footprints are these?' (in the otherwise beautifully designed outdoor scenes where Snake leaves trails in the snow). You can use the docile nature of the storm trooper-esque sentinels to your advantage though – push Snake up against a wall and the camera will swing to a down-the-corridor angle. Now tap a nearby pipe or box by pressing the action key, and as the guard approaches to investigate the noise, shimmy to another location, Tom and Jerry style.

The sheer playability of even the first half hour, coupled with the impressive plot and dialogue, is more addictive than cigarettes. We dare say that cups →

First Ten Minutes

It's all cinematic! The voiceovers a… angles remind us of James Bond scuba diving jaunts. It begins promisingly and the first few minutes of actual play are show stopping. This disc is going to remain in our PlayStation for ages, at least until it starts skipping or blows up.



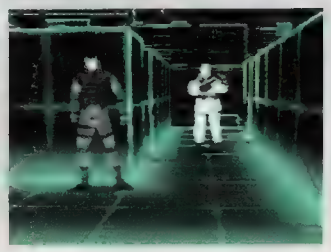
PSYCHO MANTIS

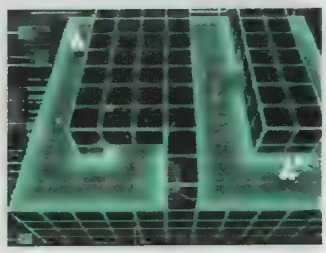
Former military leader, now your arch enemy he can read your mind. Heads up the terrorist team that you're against.

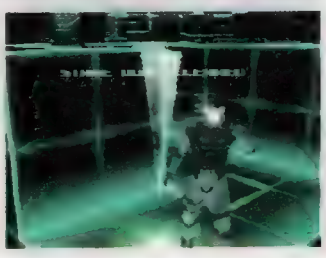
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Close ups a get close enough to show facial expressions without pixellation; don't move and don't make a sound – staying still without nudging the analogue stick is a technique you'll have to learn; it's purely aesthetic, but should you complete the game, you'll have the option to wear a bandanna next time around.

The Krypton Factor

When you start to play Metal Gear Solid, it's likely that you'll be in the 'kill everything' state of mind that most games induce. You will have to learn to leave most guards alone though, and what better way to practise than this VR training PE-style lesson. Learn how to crawl, distract guards and creep past sleeping soldiers. The latter levels involve security cameras, searchlights and quite a few enemies. The ground in training mode appears to be float, similar in style to Sony's 3D *Tetris* clone *Kurushi*. Completing each stage by reaching the flag type goal gives a feeling of immense satisfaction, although running around the mazes can feel like a game of Pac Man. Except that you're Solid Snake not a pill chomping yellow blob, and the soldiers hurt a lot more than Blinky and co.

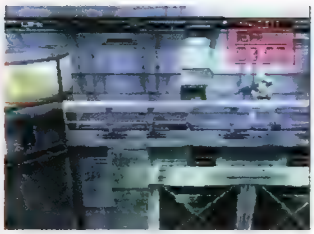


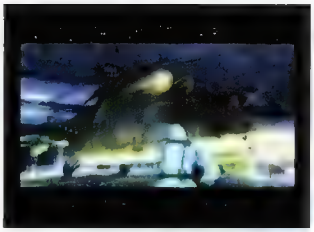




MERYL SILVERBERG

Mysterious lady who you meet early on when she points a rifle directly at your head before helping you take on dozens of guards. Cloaked in ambiguity, she reveals herself as the story unfolds. Not literally though.





FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: The merciless guards will even see fit to shoot you when you're lying on the ground. The dishonourable cads!; real-time cut scenes are used instead of Square style renders, which means that the atmospheric tension is never broken up and lost – hardly any loading times ever.

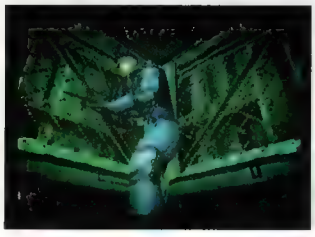
of tea will go cold and biscuits will grow hard as you are drawn in to the hugely compelling synergy of narrative and strategy driven gameplay.

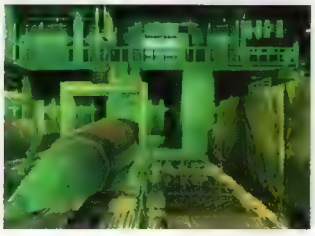
If it sounds like praise ordinarily reserved for an RPG, then that's not too far off of the mark, because as much as Metal Gear Solid is an action game and varies from assault course style stealth crawling, there are also grenade-lobbing-rocket-firing escapades to keep you entertained in a dramatic, trigger-finger satisfying manner. The collection of firearms and gadgets at Snake's disposal throughout the game would make both Arnie and Batman jealous – the contents of his pockets and, perhaps more importantly, trousers are technological feats, and we reckon contribute to the most fun set of weapons since Peter Parker started web slinging. Elements of Konami's *Contra* series are also identifiable, and the brooding soundtrack is full of trademark jingles – it's no surprise to see that the limited edition version comes with a CD chock full of game music. It's the gaming industry's Titanic theme, with Konami of Japan's resident muso standing in for James Horner and a shrieking Celine Dion.

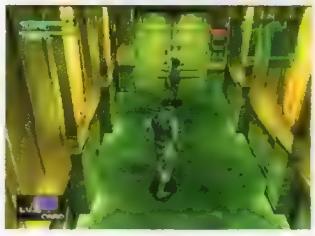
Back to talking about the game proper though, and the further one progresses, the more ingenious gameplay elements become – for example, crawling along the floor initiates a low viewpoint and may reveal an otherwise concealed air shaft to hide in or perhaps explore further. There are striking similarities to *Mission: Impossible* and Tom Cruise infiltrating the CIA headquarters by looking down through air vents. Spying on proceedings from above while trying not make any fast movements which will alert those below feels truly devious, and indeed is a true innovation for an adventure game – for the most part major events or plot developments happen within your control, rather than through the artifice of a cut scene. The cut scenes that are used are displayed using the game engine, rather than a pre-rendered FMV, allowing a seamless real-time edit in and thus dispensing with *Resident* Evil style pauses as sequences are loaded into memory from the CD. The fact that the developer felt confident enough to do this should give you some idea of how competent the basic graphics model is. Indeed, massive 3D

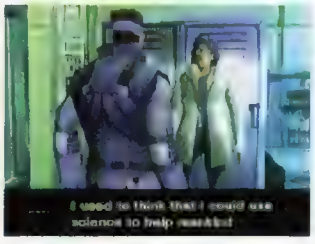
Throw Your Ass In The Air

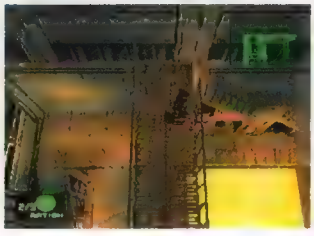
Early on in your mission, when you first meet Meryl, you'll be in the process of rescuing a hostage from a cell when you hear a nearby scuffle. Step outside and after dispatching the nearby soldiers, you'll notice a bloke in the nude with his nether regions censored.





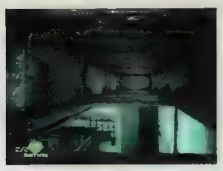
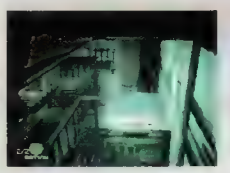
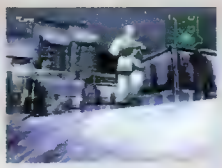


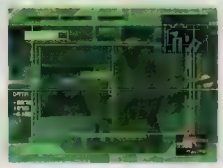
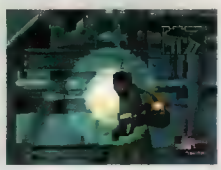




A View To A Kill

Crawl and you'll have a Snake's eye view of the lowest reaches of the corridors. Press the triangle button at any time and the camera will flip into first person mode anyway, much like *Doom*, although you can't move about or shoot. Rumours abound of a cheat to play the game in this mode though...

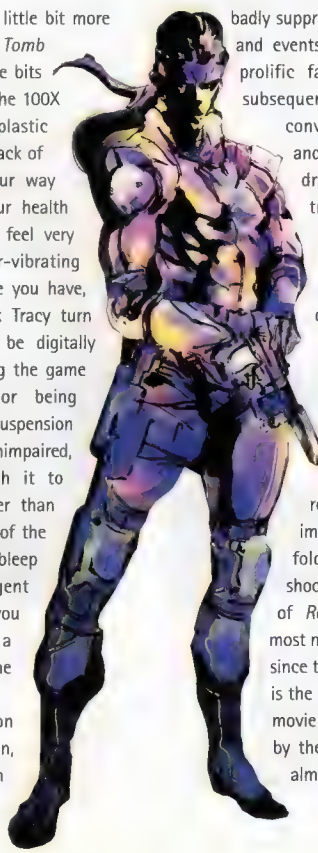




levels can be viewed via binoculars that put the game under the sort of optical scrutiny other releases just wouldn't stand up against.

Everything feels that little bit more authentic than, say *Tomb Raider*, and not just these bits of illicit eavesdropping. The 100X zoom goggles, the plastic explosive and even the pack of fags you can chimp your way through – depleting your health slightly, of course – all feel very realistic. The ear-vibrating paging/transmitter device you have, which would make Dick Tracy turn green with envy, must be digitally tuned – again preventing the game from slowing down or being interrupted – allowing suspension of disbelief to continue unimpaired, and interaction through it to occur in real-time rather than separately from the rest of the game. The little box will bleep if there's anything urgent your boss or aides think you need to know, so just find a convenient place and tune in to their broadcast.

No dodgy pixellation here, then – just clean, moody and distinctly cyan 3D. If only Snake, then, was so crisp and clear. True to form for a character of his standing, however, he has dark and vivid memories compounded by a badly suppressed subconscious, and events which trigger his prolific fainting spells and subsequent visions are convincingly blurred and true to all the best dream sequence traditions of the silver screen.



Metal Gear Solid comes as part of a two disc package, which means that there is wads of room for the in game speech, which is actually rather respectable and improves a thousand fold over the 'don't shoot I'm human' quips of *Resident Evil 2*. The most noticeable difference since the Japanese version is the inevitable American movie star voices adopted by the heroes – you can almost hear Snake's lip curl as he speaks. Along with the requisite droll one-liners for such a macho man, proverbs and pearls of Oriental wisdom are amusingly thrown into the dialogue. You may even notice the odd lift from Shakespeare drifting through the aural clichés, but it all seems to somehow fit.

After much debate, the only really negative thing that we can say about this title is that it's overly compulsive, and that if you are a reasonably keen gamer you'll probably complete the lot of it within a week. The new difficulty levels and different ways of completing the game which have been added to the English version go some way towards rectifying this problem however, and it's a minor niggle when you're talking about a game of such obvious quality. Indeed no title has created so much office banter and lyrical waxing since *Gran Turismo* appeared on our desks almost a year ago. The comic character references compliment the grown up atmosphere of the game perfectly. A Metal Gear manga series seems inevitable.

The Competition

Tenchu –
Ninja based stealth adventure which is superb but has a more oriental feel to the proceedings.

Resident Evil 2 –
Capcom's survival horror classic has more action than *Metal Gear Solid*, but its shock factor and slightly linear gameplay mean it's a lesser game when compared to Konami's masterpiece.

Tomb Raider III –
The genre defining *Tomb Raider* seems to have reached a plateau in its development curve. This was the best instalment, just, but from now on Lara will have to play catch up...

Rated by Sir Dicky Melville

STATION

Boots Lara up the ass and sends Resident Evil 2 running away scared.

\+ The best 3D action game on the PlayStation.
\+ Wholly original slant on the genre.
\- Perhaps a tad compulsive.
\- Er, nothing else. Sorry!

OUT OF 100

97

ELIMINATOR

After a brief return to form with the potentially brilliant *Rollcage*, Psygnosis seem to have returned to their Bad Old Ways.

Eliminator

Publisher: Psygnosis

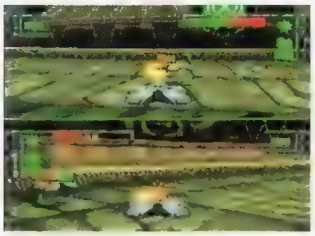
Developer: Magenta Software

Release Date: March

Game Type: Shoot 'em-up

No of Players: 1–2

Price: £34.99



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **Note the high level of fine detail sadly missing from that flying fireball; these bi-pedal armoured droids look alright in a static screenshot, but when in motion appear far less intimidating; the two player head-to-head mode should have at least been more interesting, but is just plain bland.**

First Ten Minutes

What at first seems to be a pale imitation of *WipEout* with the racing removed is soon revealed to be a grey and tedious bog-standard shoot 'em-up with perilously dated gameplay that's at turns boring and darn near impossible.

The Competition

Dodgem Arena –
Faster, more playable and far prettier future sport.

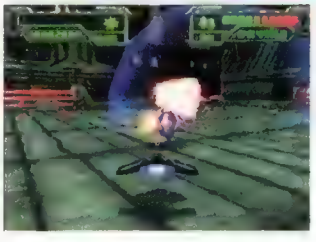
WipEout 2097 –
Faster, more playable etc. etc.

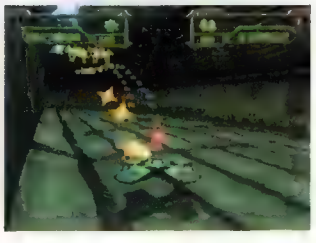
Assault Rigs –
Much the same kind of game only ground-borne and far less gak.

Compatibility

Current industry wisdom states that while excellent games will sell well, titles that are merely good will only shift as many units as those which are actively poor. Bearing this is mind gives some credence to the arrival of Eliminator on our desks, it could only be purchased by the most ignorant and unknowing public. Ostensibly a fast-moving futuresport in *WipEout*-esque ships, a few minutes play reveals the game to be a paddling-pool shallow shoot 'em-up that has the feel of a retro game with none of the accompanying charm. After a geologically-long wait for loading it turns out that the aim is to scoot from arena to arena in an unambitiously designed craft destroying whatever you may find, collecting powerups and avoiding static mines, all of which always follow in exactly the same sequence, with not a pixel's variation each time. Dumb-ass drones sweep by in easily-anticipated formations, unmoving gun turrets spit bullets from afar, requiring little more than rudimentary strafing jinks to the left or right to avoid, while massive walker robots passively follow set patterns before letting loose with weapons fire that comes almost too quickly for your inertia-cursed craft to avoid, unless it is as far away as possible. And this is where the major problem lurks in Eliminator, as the next wave of enemies after that fly in at high speed and varying altitudes, all the while pouring out multiple fast-moving projectiles.

The cumbersome elevation control for your ship's pea-shooter gun is also hideously impractical to employ on the fly, and the net result is that I spent almost two hours trying to get past the same early portion of the game, which unfortunately triggered an awful reminiscence of the abysmal *Shadow Gunner*. Now I don't claim to be a Games Animal, but the sudden jarring steepness of the difficulty curve will surely leave all but the most obsessive players by the wayside. Add to this the derivative and badly looped sound effects, generally low-rent graphical standard and dull two player game and the question has to be asked: did Psygnosis find this game in a skip outside their office? S





Rated by Christian Slater

STATION – A snivelling runt of a game that needs putting out of our misery.

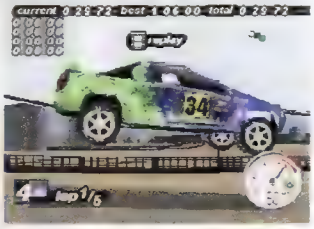
+ The front end menus are reasonably nice.
+ At points the music is OK.
- Hideously repetitive action.
- Drearily lo-tech and unlovely.

OUT OF 100

44

RALLY CROSS 2

If you thought going off-road was the sole preserve of wellied people and joyriders trying to evade the fuzz on *Police! Camera! Action!*, then think again.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Much like N_2O, it's possible to customise the paint job on your steed, meaning lurid lilac and primrose colour schemes are a must; the reasonably entertaining Replay function lets you see the more subtle effects, such as the realistic suspension movement, all the better; the mud spray could set graphical standards for others to aspire to; more exotic off-roaders are of course avaialable upon success, on top of the standard coupé and Jeep clones.

Rally Cross 2

Publisher: Sony

Developer: Idol Minds

Release Date: March

Game Type: Racing Game

No of Players: 1-2

Price: £34.99

First Ten Minutes

Alarming flashbacks to *Africa Rally* are soon allayed by the actually quite good visual stylings, but pretty soon the shortcomings of the cars' handling make the teeth gnash.

The Competition

Colin McRae Rally -

The yardstick by which all dirt-gobbling games are measured. Tear-jerkingly playable but sternly realistic as well.

Africa Rally -

Akin to a *Rage Racer* that's strayed off-road. Like an inexperienced schoolboy, it can't sustain the pleasure for long.

Compatibility

Dumbing down? Perhaps.

It almost seems with racing games nowadays that developers are scared of taking a chance and doing a full-on simulation, probably as it involves butting heads with seminal games such as *GT* or *Colin McRae Rally*, and trying to equal or surpass these involves a great deal of time, expertise and money. As a result we see games on release such as *Africa Rally*, *Max Power Racing* and even *Ridge Racer 4*, all of which are 'arcade' racers, a term which seems to effectively translate into 'unsophisticated'. This sequel to the universally-shunned *Rally Cross* is undeniably an improvement, but there still seems to be a glass-ceiling to this style of game that evokes Bart Simpson's credo of 'Don't try, can't fail'.

Hot Rally Cross Buns

That's not to say there isn't plenty in Rally Cross 2 to be praised: graphically it is extremely well-hung, with splendid shiny-surface reflections, attractive mud-splatter particle effects (à la *Colin McRae*) and a distinct absence of pop-up throughout the sweetly detailed and fast-flowing landscape. There is some perfunctory clipping when the other vehicles stray too close to the camera viewpoint but this only seems to occur badly when using the weak in-car view anyway. Bafflingly, this view sets the eye-line of your observing angle much too low and far forwards, making it damn near impossible to see the track ahead thanks to the limited perspective and rival cars obscuring the way.

Ironically the controls favour the generally outmoded digital D-pad – the analog stick seems overly jumpy, a problem made worse by the decidedly quarrelsome driving model which makes the back of the car oversteer with an unexpected jerk rather than a realistically incremental transition as seen in more advanced games. Skidding feels a touch too clinically pre-programmed and doesn't lend itself to extreme and invigorating manoeuvres on the ragged edge of control, a lack that restricts the ultimate pleasure to be gained from the game.

The collision physics, however, (an area that lets down otherwise stellar games like *Gran Turismo*) are excellent, with grittily realistic crashes that send cars tumbling like ninepins.

Whilst the attention to detail and pleasing bonus features are welcome, the underlying simplicities in Rally Cross 2 do it a profound disservice, and it could have been so very much more. Some fun can had but it's very much coin-op style frolics that doesn't stand up to too much scrutiny. Yet again, *Colin McRae* remains the daddy.

ABOVE: Roughhouse tactics are mandatory if the CPU cars are to be vanquished.

Rated by Christian Slater

STATION

Bears many of the hallmarks of a great game but is let down by aiming its sights too low.

\+ Technically sound in many aspects.
\+ Nice and meaty crash physics.
\- Happy Shopper driving model.
\- Godawful hairdryer engine sound.

OUT OF 100

70

LIVE WIRE!

A hoary old game gets dusted off and given a new coat of polygonal paint courtesy of SCi.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Malevolent trees and eerie, translucent spectres show no mercy on the Spooky level. Who ya gonna call?; a train periodically crosses the Fun Fair level, so beware or you'll get squashed flatter than Holland, as you can see here; this is *Amidar*, the 8Bit ancestor of Live Wire! A lot more fun to play than its modern descendant, ironically.

Live Wire!

Publisher: SCi

Developer: In-House

Release Date: March

Game Type: Puzzle/Arcade

No of Players: 1–2

Price: £34.99

First Ten Minutes

The control system is nightmarish to grasp at first, with the potential for uncalled-for disorientation high on the agenda. Not the most subtle of games in the visual department either, with blaring primary colours a go-go.

The Competition

Kula World –
Has all the territory-covering nous and cubic charm that *Live Wire!* lacks..

Devil Dice –
Similar in feel but a lot more lovable and atmospheric, with bags of genuine tension.

Compatibility

Those of you with pubic hair may remember a seriously lo-fi game called *Amidar* from way back in the mist-shrouded days when videogaming was fresh. The aim was to traverse a grid with a paintbrush that left a trail of your assigned colour, and the ultimate goal was to encircle as many squares on the lattice as possible thus filling them with your particular hue. And all this while jousting with rival brushes.

Live Wire! is a three-dee, end of the millennium re-interpretation of this simple but effective basic game idea, with characters constructed from polygons replacing the plain pixels of yore. Taking control of what looks like a strange cross between a fish, a stegosaurus and a jalapeño pepper, you must guide it around the fifty or so levels, which unsurprisingly expand upon the basic quadrilateral game arena of old by introducing spherical and irregularly-shaped areas into the fray. These are modelled around comedy themes such as Wild West, 70s Disco, Haunted House and so on, with the patrolling enemies and scenery altering to fit each scenario. As expected the plain-Jane gameplay from yesteryear has been beefed up by the addition of a whopping thirty powerups that appear as special tiles on the floor, and can have effects as disparate as: flipping the camera angle suddenly; creating a doppelgänger of the player; summoning a black hole to suck in the opposition and the familiar range of speed-ups, bonuses and aggressive functions.

Socket to Me, Baby

The problem with Live Wire! is that the gameplay of its 2D predecessor was heavily reliant on being able to see all of the game area at once: the plunge into a proper representation of length, breadth and depth has had the unfortunate side-effect of over-complicating matters like controlling the direction the line-laying character travels in, unless the camera is locked to a static third-person mode which also serves to turn the controls into basic directional functions that helps matters a touch. In addition the narrow viewing angle makes it hard to keep track of where the enemy creatures and other painters are, despite the instant 'zoom out' feature. The net result is that the game feels strangely uninvolving, with no real sense of urgency in spite of plenty going on all around. Add to this the somewhat garish and jaggedy-edged graphics and it's a sad case of an elegantly simple idea that's been forcibly tarted up, and as a result has much most of its original charm.

Rated by Christian Slater

STATION		OUT OF 100
A good idea on paper proves to be strangely soulless in actuality – shame.	+ The level designs and predatory thingies are groovy. + Tough long-term challenge. - Irksome control method, skittish camera. - Graphically unrefined.	70

POY POY 2

Imagine a future where hurling rocks and missiles at your mates is a popular recreational sport. Your friendships may not withstand the test, but hey it's top of the ratings!

Poy Poy 2

Publisher: Konami

Developer: In-House

Release Date: February

Game Type: Hurl 'em-up

No of Players: 1–4

Price: £34.99

First Ten Minutes

Wow! This version has a rendered intro. It won't be long before the in game graphics look this good, not long at all my son. Let the games commence! Ohh, oww, ugh, boom, ha ha ha!

CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN: The contents of the broken crate spill out, the gold hearts give you Luck points, the red ball makes you run faster and the black thing? A big bomb!; uh-oh. I seem to have awoken the beast in the egg. Run, run I tell ya!; the beast can turn into a flying dragon if left out of his shell for too long, it's okay to panic now!

The Competition

Micro Machines V3 –
Although this is a racing game it still boasts more madcap multiplayer action than most.

Bomberman World –
The only Bomberman game on the PlayStation still delivers the laughs in multiplayer mode.

Poy Poy –
The original game was well received but poorly stocked, as a result it passed by largely unnoticed.

Compatibility

Don't throw stones in glass houses, as the saying goes. Luckily there aren't any glass houses in the sport of Poy Poy and it's just as well, because the idea behind it is to throw stuff at your mates, just for points.

The genius that was *Poy Poy* consisted thus: up to four players were pitched against each other in one of the many arenas, scattered around which are a variety of objects including rocks, logs and crates. Players grabbed these objects (and each other) and hurled them at other opponents until they died. Simple.

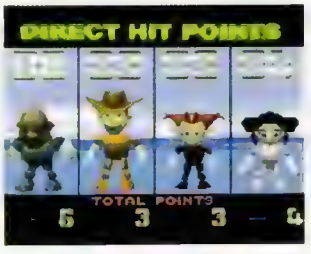
Several changes have been made to the original game, which may seem cursory but add enough to the action to make the sequel worthwhile. There are twice as many characters to play around with, including all of the old favourites, and additional new moves like the forward dash are welcome – allowing you to charge into an opponent and knock him down or tactically escape an incoming projectile.

Stone Me!

The rudimentary arenas were always completely flat; there are now different elevations as well as various interactive elements. This means that the gameplay is augmented by the need to vie for a vantage point and pummel your opponents from above. When selecting your character you will be given a choice of Powerglove weapons; these will establish which powerups can be collected, and are determined by the strengths of the particular personality chosen.

There are at least thirty different powerups with which to augment your gameplay. Personal favourites at present include: Poison, which drugs players for a short time; Fireball, which sets them ablaze; Psychowhip, which works like a lasso; and best of all, the comedy Hammer.

Konami have a strange dream. You see, by 2029 the sport will become an official Olympic event. Call them crazy fools but in ten or twenty years time who knows how popular videogames will be and how seriously they are taken. There is every possibility that international deathmatches could be played and beamed out the world over. If this was to be the case then Poy Poy 2 would be up there with *Quake XXIII* as one of the greatest multiplayer games on this fair planet.



Rated by Paul Stocks

STATION

Few multiplayer games offer this much fun. If you've got a multitap you need this game.

\+ Fun, addictive and incredibly playable.
\+ More characters, arenas and cool powerups.
\- Not suitable for the lonely.
\- Absolutely dreadful music throughout.

OUT OF 100

83

THE LOST WORLD

The original film was a state of the art vehicle for demonstrating the potential of computer generated imagery. So why have all the games been crap?

The Lost World

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: Dreamworks Int.

Release Date: Out now

Price: £19.99

STATION

+ The music is bearable, I suppose.
+ Er, The dinosaurs?

- Repetetive gameplay.
- Far too linear.

OUT OF 100

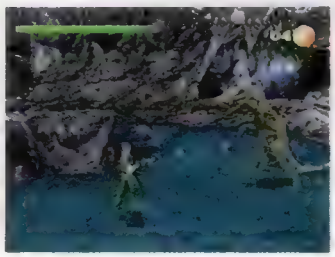
29

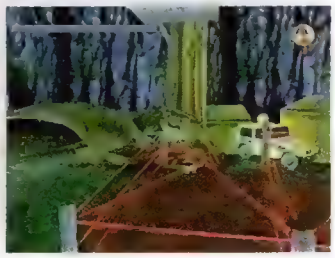
Dated platformer based on a licence. Are we really at the end of the nineties?

Rated by Richard Melville

Jurassic Park has been one of the biggest missed opportunities in gameplay terms for any film licence. The 16Bit incarnations were quite good but this sequel, running on a shiny 32Bit next generation console, should have been brilliant. Sadly, a couple of years on, The Lost World is even worse than before. The platform levels, where you can control dinosaurs and then humans, are pseudo 3D and although they look nice, the gameplay is so shallow and repetitive that your mind will be wandering to many a lost world while you should be concentrating upon the dissection of a compy's spines. It's woefully sad to see the kiddy appeal of Spielberg's film squandered upon a below average game. What's even more upsetting is that the game has sold enough units now to qualify for Platinum status!

It's possible that you might glean a day's enjoyment from this, but for the majority of gamers it's overly simple and so similar from level to level that it makes a game like *Gex: Deep Cover Gecko* seem like an olympic gold medallist in the genre. The Lost World is a limp game by anyone's standard and it doesn't really deserve anything from you, even a brief date from Blockbuster. Don't give it a second look, it's ugly.





TOTAL DRIVIN'

A budget makeover for this title provides excellent value for money, and provides a viable option for those procrastinators who just can't make their mind up...

Total Drivin'

Publisher: Infogrames

Developer: Eutechnyx

Release Date: March

Price: £19.99

STATION

+ Varied tracks and loads of vehicles.
+ Great tunes. Tune!

- Handling a bit off for some vehicles.
- Instant 'Game Over' tumbles.

OUT OF 100

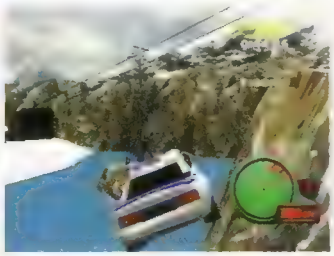
78

A good, technically solid driving game which is the best budget all rounder. As Jeremy Clarkson would say.

Rated by Richard Melville

Before Eutechnyx made Max Power and Le Mans, this was their first foray into PlayStation racing. Featuring virtually every type of car available from Ferrari style sports cars to dune buggies and rally cars, Total Drivin' portrays so many styles of racing and options it's a perfect buy for those who can't make their mind up. There is a link up mode which allows four player racing, while the basic two player mode is also quite impressive. The soundtrack is even fairly listenable to – in a Euro-Techno kind of way.

The scenery can be well and truly traversed, meaning that you can fall into molten lava, water and off of the edge of cliffs. When it was originally released, it was technically brilliant and although *Max Power* has improved upon the original formula by a significant margin, the £20 Platinum price tag makes it a brilliant four player link game. The Platinum racing stable now has *V-Rally* and *TOCA* in it's grip, and Total Drivin' falls somewhere in between the two, but for budget *McRae* style action this is definitely the pick of the aged yet playable selection.



PRO PINBALL BIG RACE USA

Since I was a young boy, I played that silver ball. From Soho to the PlayStation – but at least there was more than one table...

Ah pinball! The sporting equivalent of badge collecting and both practised by those who wear nice denim jackets. Stereotyping, of course, but for the most part, true. The original *Pro Pinball* was a fiendishly addictive, extremely well programmed, single table affair and this is much the same – just a different table. The LED style sub games are American themed so you've got taxis, lotto and invasions from space all translated into ball bouncing antics. These are all well and good, however, and really the faults of the game all lie in that lack of variety – die hard pinball fans may appreciate playing the same set up over and over again, but it isn't going to cut the mustard with the rest of us.

It's a shame though, because it's arguably the best example of 32Bit console thrills you're likely to experience and frankly we're stunned that the developer didn't add another table, or even include the one from the previous game. It's not forward thinking and it's only because the PlayStation market is so vast that the publisher will be able to get away with it. Feel free to purchase but only if you dream about silver balls and accumulative mushroom rebounds in your sleep.

Pro Pinball Big Race USA

Publisher: Empire

Developer: In-House

Release Date: Out now

Price: £39.99

STATION

+ Proper ball movement.
+ Authentic feel.

- 1 Table? Come on lads...
- Minimalist presentation.

OUT OF 100

66

Great, but like a driving game with only one circuit and no variations.

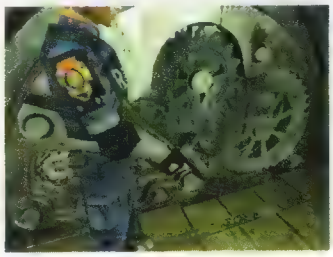
Rated by Richard Mellville

RESIDENT EVIL 2: DUAL SHOCK

Q. What happens when you take one of the best games ever, then make the joypad rumble too? A. Not a lot, really.

Soon after the US release of Resident Evil 2, Capcom released this Dual Shock version as a sales booster for its landmark series. As you can probably imagine, weapons and zombie encounters make the pad shake but, cleverly, it also shakes when the music suddenly crescendos and a surprise event occurs. Thus it amplifies further the jumpy nature of the game.

That said, it's still Resident Evil 2 and not worth anymore than the normal sequel. What can be said about Resident Evil 2 that hasn't already been said? It's a gore led exploration of an adventure game based on cinema horror in Japanese style. Capcom were wrongly criticised for not making it vastly different to the original, and it's still among the top ten games on the PlayStation and as essential to your collection as *Tekken 3* and *Gran Turismo*.



Resident Evil 2: Dual Shock

Publisher: Capcom US

Developer: Capcom

Release Date: Out Now (IMPORT)

Price: £52

STATION

+ Great atmosphere.
+ Long lasting gameplay.

- Easy to lose the thread of the game.
- Loading times between rooms.

OUT OF 100

94

Still Resident Evil 2, still superb. Vibration, while undeniably always a plus point, doesn't up the score.

Rated by Richard Mellville

TWISTED METAL 3

Business should be good for panel-beaters quite soon, thanks to this fender-bending effort from our friends in America.

Twisted Metal 3

Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: 989 Studios

Release Date: Out now (import)

Available From:
Project K (Tel: 0181 508 1328)

Game Type: Racing/Arcade

No of Players: 1–2

Price: £55 approx

First Ten Minutes

The manner in which the vehicles handle, roll over like keen puppy dogs at a moment's notice and fly through the air like Superman makes Twisted Metal 3 a prig to deal with initially, in spite of the unpretentious gameplay standards it aims for.

Compatibility

A couple of reasonably well received predecessors have ensured the arrival of this third helping of car-crushing mayhem, but the highway has become a much more dangerous place since then thanks to chassis-busting titles like *Vigilante 8* and *Rogue Trip* covering similar bases and adding so much more. This, currently Yankee-only, release takes the baton and reverses back and forth over it mercilessly, but in the company of the above the duo is arguably starting to seem rather stale and outmoded.

Based around an enclosed-arena format, Twisted Metal 3 pits the usual range of petrolhead reprobates against one another in an all-against-all fight for supremacy. Each vehicle has a permanent machine gun as standard fitting, but each can also fire immolating napalm, lob mortar shells at distant targets, set off hopelessly inaccurate missiles or give their jalopy a temporary speed boost. Icons for these are scattered about liberally, which is a good thing as the other cars are unrelentingly vicious, with nasty crossfires often occurring in cramped areas that are difficult to make an escape from. A specialised weapon particular to each character can also be called upon that inflicts proportionally higher damage than the common or garden ordnance, and comes accompanied with a suitably pyrotechnic graphical effect.

There Goes The No Claims

Damage inflicted doesn't have an active effect on the vehicle's performance, but taking too many hits will result in the once-gleaming coachwork becoming seriously bent and indeed twisted, albeit through a single graphical stage, meaning the cars go from pristine to mangled in one fell swoop. Running through a First Aid icon handily replenishes the health bar though, and does an admirable impression of visiting a branch of Kwik-Fit where the mechanics are all on strong amphetamines. Falling from a great height is also never fatal, and strangely does no damage at all, meaning hilarious and quite improbable short

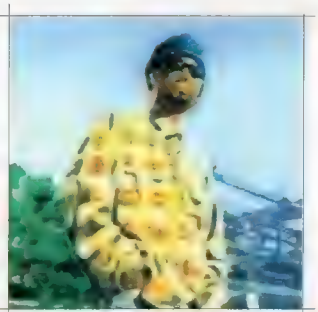
For Whom The Cars Roll...

CLUB KID

He's a raver with an Yankee flavour, hence the baby's dummy and Smiley lollipop stick, but when this kid gets sorted he's not interested in peace and togetherness, just how much damage he can do before the guest list closes.

FLOWER POWER

She may dress to kill, but Flower Power's only interest in this automotive conflict is stopping it so the trees and little animals can live unmolested. Whatever you say, love...



THUMPER

Fresh from the hood this homeboy ain't gonna let no wack sucka jerk him around. His low-riding caddy has a ground-shaking sound system that can be used as a weapon, just don't fiddle with his stereo's settings, or he'll put a cap in your punk ass.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Oh dear Nuger's Tonka toy truck looks like it has lost its footing, and is heading for a date with the great big Foreman in the Sky; a detonation at disturbingly close range makes WartHog and Firestarter think twice about carrying on their private scrap.

cuts can be taken from the topmost layers of the battlefield down to the dingy depths with no fear of death at all. It is, however, possible to flip the cars onto their roof, triggering a decidedly uninspiring animation where the stricken car shrinks to nothing and then appears again on its wheels. Now I'm all for 'bodging' games where necessary to make them more practically playable, but this little scene struck me as particularly lazy and ruined the suspension of disbelief required to play such an outlandish game anyway.

The game physics are of course never going to be as austere as *Colin McRae*, say, but the artistic licence taken with Newton's laws seems to go beyond mere cartoon exaggeration and extend into the realm of downright liberties. Everything seems to happen in slo-mo, particularly when falling or jumping, while the enemy cars will periodically leap vertically upwards a good twenty to thirty feet and then float gently back downwards as if the game was set on the moon, or somewhere with equally languid gravity. Often you'll find the car arcing gracefully through the air in a *Dukes of Hazzard*-style jump when all you intended to do was take a bump a bit fast, leading to a tendency towards over-cautiousness to avoid being out of control for extended periods. This situation is made worse by the brow-furrowing handling of the vehicles, which seem to have no momentum to speak of and react very doughily to your control. Clean manoeuvring at low speed is especially difficult to execute, an important failing as much time is spent pivoting desperately to get the opposition in your sights.

The various physical settings for the mechanical mêlée also whiff of seen-it-beforedness: one level sees the fight take place around a quaint representation of London, replete with an Underground tunnel, Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, Eros and even double yellow lines, while another sees the combatants slug it out inside Hanger 18, infamous repository of a crashed alien saucer as rumour would have it (shades of *Rogue Trip*'s Area 51 level, methinks). An icy chute-filled North Pole stage is slippery business while ancient Egypt is a featureless desert. However the Blimp level is entertaining, being set on an enormous airship thrumming through the sky, replete with a yawning gap in the floor in which the unwary can fall through into the stratosphere.

God Bless...

Is it just me or isn't there a distinct lack of decent games coming out of America? All we could come up with that was any good was the *Abe's* games, *FutureCop LAPD 2100* and Crystal Dynamics' impeccable output. Apart from that it's all very run-of-the-mill, and Twisted Metal 3 shows just how far the Yanks are lagging behind the Europeans and Japanese, as similar games produced away from the USA have proved to be superior in almost every aspect. C'mon Uncle Sam, buck your ideas up!

The Competition

Vigilante 8 -

This seventies-inspired automotive combat game owes much to the first two *Twisted Metals*, but definitely has the edge in graphical terms and handling of the vehicles.

Rogue Trip -

Iffy visual tendencies rub the shine off what is an otherwise OK car conflict game, although it's short lived fun at best. Horribly over- and under- rated in the press, by the way.

Rated by Christian Slater

STATION

Like listening to REM, nothing massively offensive but nothing exciting either.

+ The characters are quite droll.
+ Eight-way scraps are always a giggle.
- Unexciting for the eyeballs, shoddily clipping polygons.
- Wooly physics and handling dull the edge of playability.

OUT OF 100

57

AFRICA RALLY

If you're going to set a rally series on just one continent, then with varied climes from desert sands to swamp lands, Africa would appear to be a good place to do it.

Africa Rally

Publisher: TBA

Developer: Prism Arts

Release Date: Out now [import]

Available From: Project K (Tel: 0181 508 1328)

Game Type: Arcade Rally Racer

No of Players: One

Price: £52

CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN: Jumps and bumps galore in this game. Some of them are on corners or packed with other cars. This looks easy but there's a sharp left corner coming up; never overtake on the brow of a hill. Thankfully, rules like this one, that normally hinder our driving pleasure, can be thrown out of the window: there are a series of comedy cars to pick from in the first class, and it's nice to see a game that doesn't take itself too seriously with the racing pedigree.

First Ten Minutes

Cool. It's *Sega Rally*. Only not. And its got one of those great arcade feels to it where you can power slide around corners and pass by the other cars. Top fun, and no mistake.

Get ready some abuse!

You'll need plenty of it, but unusually not for direction at the gameplay. There's just no getting away from the fact that after twenty minutes or so, everyone who knows anything about games will come up to you when playing Africa Rally and say one of the following (or something similar): 'Wow, that looks like *Sega Rally*'; 'Cool, that should be called *PlayStation Rally*'; or 'Didn't I play something like that in the arcades a couple of years ago?'.

We don't really like people like this, and thanks to the laws restricting the amount of bodily harm we can inflict on annoying people, there's not a lot we can do. Matters aren't helped by the fact that you'll be thinking exactly same thing, because this game wants to be *Sega Rally* so badly it's embarrassing.

Put aside all that frivolous malarkey though, and what you're left with is a quality racing game let down by a lack of difficulty. The controls are smooth and the feedback you get is convincing enough. Power sliding around corners and recovering your line is a trick that pays off big time and the whole look of the game is pleasing on the eye. For about two days.

Because that's about how long it will take to complete. Now once you've finished the championship mode this does unlock all the cars (of which there is an impressive list) and the courses for a one-off race, but what's the point when you've completed them already?

There's a nice enough two player mode with the pointless Memory Card battle feature (pointless as you can't improve your cars, just unlock the classes which, as I pointed out, won't take long anyway), but there's simply not enough depth or challenge to make it anything more than an admirable, but unsuccessful, attempt at greatness.

ABOVE LEFT & RIGHT: Although there are only five courses to drive on, it should be mentioned that they all look groovy and there are no discernible glitches to ruin everything.

The Competition

Colin McRae Rally -

Far and away the classiest and most enjoyable rallying sim for the PlayStation, and one of the best driving games you can find.

V–Rally -

Starting to shows its age and become a victim of the all-new and more powerful racing games out there. A new lease of life on Platinum makes it a worthwhile consideration.

Compatibility

Rated by Paul Mellerick

STATION

Smooth and playable rally game, let down by its lack of depth and challenge.

+ Quality arcade feel and look.
+ Exuberant car control.
- You'll complete it in two days.
- Not enough courses or variety.

OUT OF 100

55

STREET FIGHTER ZERO 3

No X-Men, just the hardcore Street Fighter. It's too late to ask whether Capcom have gone too far, so we ask instead – how much further has the game progressed?

Street Fighter Zero 3

Publisher: Capcom

Developer: Capcom

Release Date: Out now (import)

Available From: Project K (Tel: 0181 508 1328)

Game Type: Beat 'em-up

No of Players: 1–2

Price: £52 (approx)

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Fireballs and flaming projectiles are more deadly than ever, growing to incredible sizes for multiple hit attacks; Ryu takes on new contestant Juli who moves just like Cammy, but he of the white pyjamas stays virtually the same; the options screen has a PocketStation option for gaining moves and gambling characters in Vs mode.

First Ten Minutes

The Anime colour palette and decorations are bang on style-wise and the gameplay options are superb. It's just like meeting an old friend who you had grown tired of but now has a refreshed, near salivating appeal.

The Competition

Tekken 3 –
Instantly stepping up to reclaim superiority, the Namco classic is quite distant from the Anime style combo led extravaganza of *Street Fighter Zero 3*.

Street Fighter EX+Alpha –
Street Fighter in 3D. No real surprises and a decent game, but way behind *Tekken 3* in the gameplay stakes.

Street Fighter Alpha 2 –
The predecessor to the game in question with a style identical to the original series – a hybrid of *Turbo* and *Super* with additional pyrotechnics such as on screen flashes.

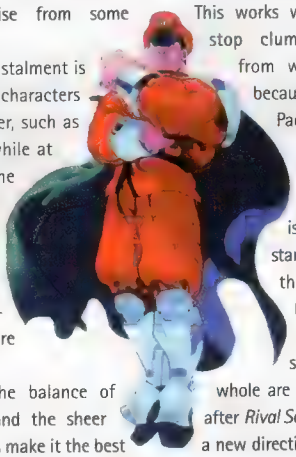
Compatibility

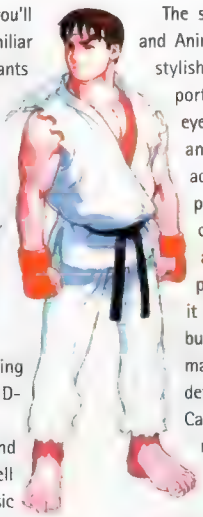
How many Street Fighter games have there been?

About thirty altogether, on God knows how many formats. The Zero series is still the closest to the original *Street Fighter 2*, however, so it's strictly hardcore six button joystick users only that will approach this game with open arms. Others will question the fact that the pint sized 'humour' *Street Fighter* game, *Pocket Fighters*, was released in the UK and er, wasn't that great – despite gaining praise from some uninformed sources.

The point of this instalment is to further add retro characters onto the fighting roster, such as Zangief and Blanka, while at the same time introducing brand new combatants and, of course, those from other Capcom games. The Capcom beat 'em-up fave Sakura is here yet again too.

Gameplay wise the balance of characters is good, and the sheer number of participants make it the best 2D beat 'em-up on the machine. The triple super bars are still included and the move lists have changed slightly – fans might recognise the differing punches of Ken for example – but Dragon Punches and fireballs are still available without alteration. Which makes the game seem a bit odd as you'll pick characters which you feel familiar with, and criticise the new contestants because they don't seem to have quite the same depth. One major improvement is that instead of using the awkward Sony D-Pad for circular movements, you can instead opt for the Dual Shock's thumb stick. This works well, and will stop clumsy veterans from whinging about losing because of the unfamiliar D-Pad controls.





The background scenes are well detailed and the music is of Capcom's usual high standard, utilising as it does their Q-Sound system (imitation surround). In fact, the presentational standards of the game as a whole are unusually high – perhaps after *Rival Schools* Capcom have taken a new direction.

The speeches between bouts and Anime intermissions – with stylish cut off character portraits and phantom eyebrows – are pure manga, and overall the game addresses it's public like a politician preaching to the converted. It's unlikely to attract new gamers or persuade casual fans that it is better than *Tekken 3*, but in this period of utter market saturation, there is definitely still a place for Cammy, Chunners and the new generation among the woeful piles of crap.

The biggest problem will be getting itself noticed, and for a 2D beat 'em-up, that's no mean feat. Hopefully if Virgin release this in the UK then they'll be able to convince the masses, like they did with *Rival Schools*, instead of just the combo pugilism posse that have already shoved dozens of 50p pieces into the machine.

Rated by Richard Melville

STATION	+ Curious PocketStation compatibility. + Dual stick Joystick control.	OUT OF 100
Complex, playable and in a new stylish shell. We wanted Street Fighter 3 though!	- Some missing frames of animation. - Essentially still eight years old.	87

EHRGEIZ

From a company better known for their elephantine RPGs, here's an unexpected change of tack from questing to scrapping.

Ehrgeiz

Publisher: Squaresoft

Developer: Dream Factory

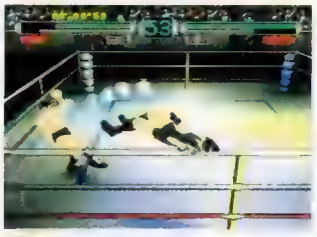
Release Date: Out now [import]

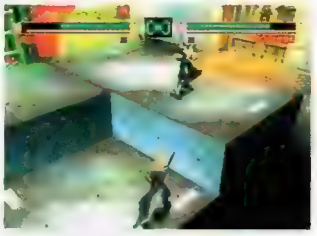
Available From: Project K (Tel: 0181 508 1328)

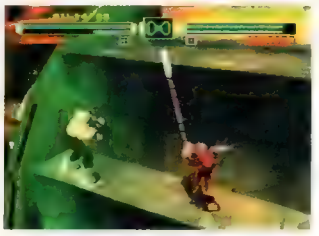
Game Type: Beat 'em-up

No of Players: 1–2

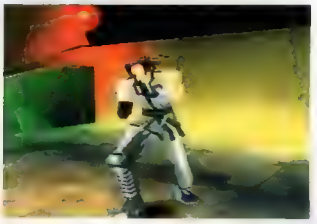
Price: £52 [approx]





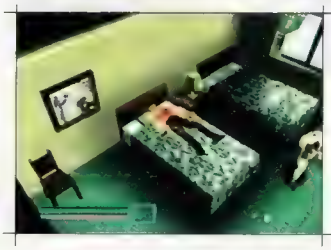


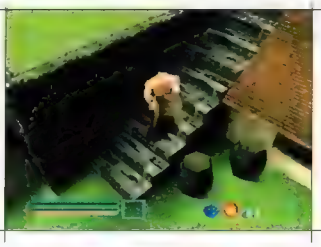
It's decidedly unusual, from tongue twisting title down. At a distance it bears all the familiar hallmarks of a beat 'em-up, with a pair of protagonists exchanging increasingly outrageous blows with one another, accompanied by much whooping and incandescent effects. However pretty soon it all starts to deviate from the accepted fighting game norms we've grown used to: the combat arenas are more often than not split into different levels of elevation, ranging from a simple hut roof in the corner through to dirty great stone causeways, opening up possibilities for using the terrain to one's advantage, particularly when using either ranged and missile attacks.



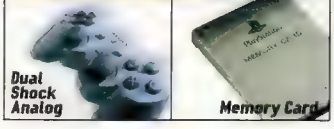
Role Away the Stone

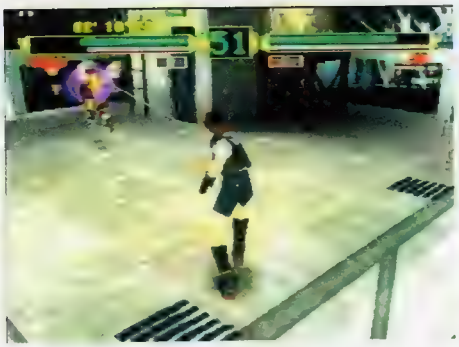
Yet another non-standard slant on the accepted norms comes in the wholly unexpected inclusion of a pseudo-RPG mode, obviously a nod to Square's own particular speciality. The Jap text makes the plot a wee bit hard to understand, but it appears you can romp around a dungeon complex with a friend in tow, buying weapons and so on. Incredibly for an Oriental RPG, the music isn't immediately cause for suicide.

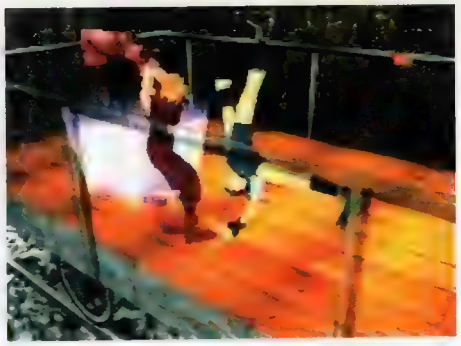




Compatibility







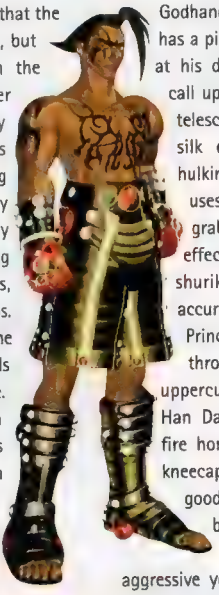
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Yoko's yo-yo can snick out and grab a target from afar. I wonder if it's got a clutch?: turning into a vicious mystic canine is bound to unsettle any opponent: the kind of move that has Sir Isaac Newton spinning in his grave. In accordance with the more conventional laws of acceleration, of course.

As the fighters are often not toe-to-toe there obviously exists a danger that the combat will become disjointed, but the intelligent way in which the characters track one another helps to keep things fluidly playable, even when there's much leaping about going down. Attacking moves are easy to execute with the gameplay focusing more upon gaining cunning tactical positions, rather than reeling off combos. Fortunately, though, not to the extent where the fisticuffs feels over-simplified and hence lame. However it does seem a touch easy on the more open levels for the characters without a projectile weapon to become pinned down by those that do, thus necessitating a lot of rolling about on the floor to get out of their field of fire.

In the visual department Ehrgeiz is undeniably no slouch either, with super-detailed and really rather huge sprites that stay smooth and solid even when the camera is zooming in for close and flurried encounters. The 3D is especially effective too, with the characters' whirling limbs and long-range weapons seeming to fly out towards the camera's viewpoint.

Character Building

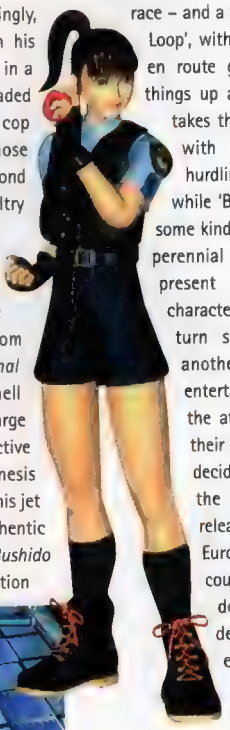
The spread of characters is also a pleasing departure from the usual beat 'em-up suspects: Combat-trousered Godhand somewhat unsportingly has a pistol and time-delay mines at his disposal, Lee Shuwen can call upon a terrifyingly effective telescopic pike from under his silk dressing gown and the hulking wrestler Dasher Inube uses a devastating charge and grab combination to painful effect. Sasuke the ninja throws shuriken with speed and accuracy, the cheekily named Prince Naseem has a fireball-throwing ability to add to his uppercut and the semi-cyborg Han Daehan can, intriguingly, fire homing missiles from his kneecaps. The laydeez put in a good showing also, headed by girlish SWAT cop Yoko, whose aggressive yo-yo skills go beyond Splitting the Atom and the sultry Jo, who can turn into a vicious scampering dog at will.

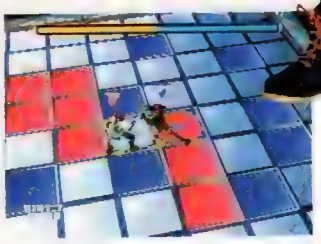


Another squirt of originality comes in the notable appearance of characters from Squaresoft's own *Titanic*, *Final Fantasy VII*. Blonde bombshell Cloud brings his unfeasibly large weapon to the fray with effective results while his arch-nemesis Sephiroth is also present in all his jet black glory, complete with authentic samurai attack stances à la *Bushido Blade*. This kind of cross-pollination in games is interesting and welcome, and looks set to continue with the appearance of *Tekken*'s Yoshimitsu in Namco's impending *Soul Calibur*.

Bonus Beats

A brace of decidedly unusual mini games that are utterly separate from the main fighting section are also thrown into the mix. 'Battle Runner' is a 1999 homage to Daley Thompson's Decathlon, consisting, as it does, of running a race between two of the game characters. The sprints can take the form of a simple lap around a boxing ring, a 'Climb Loop' – which involves scaling obstacles as part of the race – and a figure-of-eight 'Moebius Loop', with the exchange of blows en route gladly possible to liven things up a touch. 'Beach Runner' takes the action to the seaside, with button-bashing and hurdling the order of the day, while 'Battle Panel' seems to be some kind of live action version of perennial unwanted Christmas present Othello, where the characters run over a grid and turn squares one colour or another. Each is mildly entertaining, but won't hold the attention for too long. In their wisdom Squaresoft have decided to leave Ehrgeiz on the back burner and not release it to we unworthy Europeans for now, but you could certainly do a great deal worse if you're determined to buy an exclusive and expensive import game to wow your mates with.





ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT: The Moebius Loop and Battle Panel bonus modes mode: not your usual beat 'em-up fare by any means.

First Ten Minutes

A technically superb and witty FMV bodes well, while the straightforward basic moves flow together with ease and don't require clever-clogs combinations to pull off, making Ehrgeiz easy to acquire friends with, although the three-dimensionality can prove an added hindrance at first.

The Competition

BloodSport -
Formerly called *Tribal*, this impending arrival from Sony may well eclipse *Ehrgeiz* in terms of depth.

Bloody Roar -
Hyper-kinetic manga-fied beat 'em-up that may be a touch garish for purists but provides concentrated gratification.

Tobal -
Almost a proto-version of this game, with an added quest mode to boot.

Rated by Christian Slater

STATION

Unusual and fanciable take on the beat 'em-up that would have made a great coin-op.

\+ Gorgeous and huge player sprites.
\+ Lithely playable, with a new 3D slant on brawling.
\- Sub games are original but tokenistic.
\- The order of opponents is always the same.

OUT OF 100

83

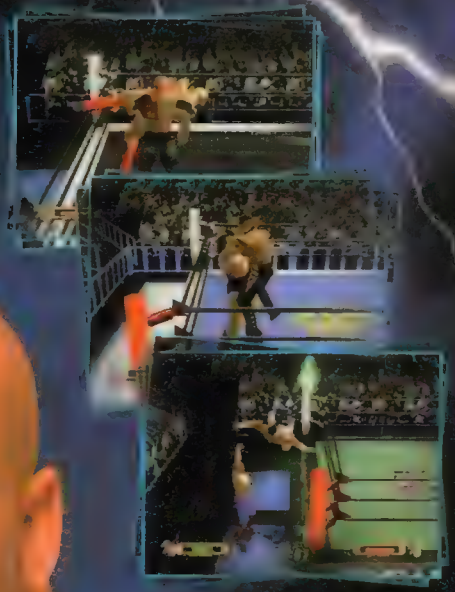
The Calm Before...

THE STORM

When the deadliest Wrestlers in the world clash, your eyes and ears will be filled with the awesome power of THUNDER!

With stacks of new features 'Thunder' becomes the undisputed Champion.

- 60+ superstars, plus hidden wrestlers
- Compulsive multi-player action
- Official WCW commentary
- Tons of devastating moves including trademark styles
- PLUS, real arenas, real rants, real crowds, real chanting.



From the makers of the Nintendo 64 hit WCW/nWo REVENGE

Are you brave enough to play where only "the big boys play"

WCW/nWo THUNDER

Thunder rolls in exclusively on PlayStation on February 12th

PlayStation

THQ

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Your complete guide to getting in touch with the videogames industry...

ACCLAIM	Tel: 0171 344 5000	
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Internet:	www.core-design.com	
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DMA DESIGN	Tel: 01382 561 333	
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Internet:	N/A	
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Internet:	www.gtinteractive.com	
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Internet:	N/A	
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Internet:	www.maxis.com	
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Internet:	www.midway.com	
MINDSCAPE	Tel: 01444 246 333	
Internet:	N/A	
NAMCO	Tel: 0171 734 7737	
Internet:	www.namco.com	
	www.namco.co.uk	
NAUGHTY DOG	No UK offices	
Internet:	www.naughtydog.com	
OCEAN/INFOGRAMES	Tel: 0161 832 6633	
Internet:	www.infogrames.co.uk	
PROBE	Tel: 0181 680 4142	
Internet:	www.probe.co.uk	
PSYGNOSIS	Tel: 0151 282 3000	
Internet:	www.psygnosis.com	
SCI	Tel: 0171 585 3308	
Internet:	www.sci.co.uk	
SHINY	No UK offices	
Internet:	www.shiny.com	
SONY COMPUTER ENT.	Tel: 0171 911 8700	
Internet:	www.playstation.co.uk	
Helpline:	0881 505 505	
SQUARESOFT	No UK offices	
Internet:	www.squaresoft.com (USA)	
	www.square.co.jp (Japan)	
TAKE 2 INT.	Tel: 0171 3847500	
Internet:	www.take2games.com	
TELSTAR	Tel: 01932 22223	
Internet:	www.telstar.co.uk/tes/index.htm	
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Internet:	www.thq.com	
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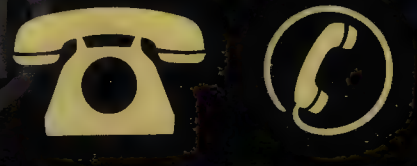
Internet:	www.titusgames.com	
UBI SOFT	Tel: 0181 944 9000	
Internet:	www.ubisoft.com	
VIRGIN	Tel: 0171 368 2255	
Internet:	www.vie.co.uk	



Try to make your calls to companies pertinent and only call with problems after you have read the manual throughly. If you've exhausted your options and explored every avenue, then you've every right to call the company about your software. After all, if you'd bought anything else off a company and you had a question, they'd be happy to help!

THE WORLD'S BEST SELLING PLAYSTATION TIPS MAGAZINE

PlayStation SOLUTIONS

THE WORLD'S BEST SELLING PLAYSTATION TIPS MAGAZINE
PlayStation SOLUTIONS
SPECIAL FEATURE CHEATING EXPLORED
Akuji The Heartless
MUSIC Official Tutorial
Solutions To:
Sensible Soccer European Club Edition
Abe's Oddysee
Megaman Legends
O.D.T
In This Issue
LARA LAID BARE! Codes inside
Akuji The Heartless • MUSIC • Megaman Legends • O.D.T
Sensible Soccer European Club Edition • Abe's Oddysee

SOLUTIONS TO:

- AKUJI THE HEARTLESS
- MUSIC • ODT
- ABE'S ODDYSEE
- SENSIBLE SOCCER
- MEGAMAN LEGENDS

MASSIVE CHEATS SECTION

ON SALE NOW!

THE eDGE

What gives people the edge? What sets the merely good apart from the truly great? Cheating, of course. And here are a few scraps from the table of gameplay gods and devious sods, including extra codes for *TOCA 2* and 99 lives for Spyro. There's also the final part of our *Tomb Raider III* solution, taking Lara from Nevada to the barren plains of Antarctica.

BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

BY ANY MEANS NE

TOCA 2

Some more little codes for you to back up the ones we gave you in the last issue. We're on the look out for any more.

ALL CARS
Enter MECHANIC as a name in single player mode.

ALL TRACKS
Enter BIGLEY as a name in single player mode.

NEW OPTION IN CHALLENGE MODE
Enter DINKYBIT as a name in single player mode.

DISABLE CHAMPIONSHIP DISQUALIFICATION
Enter PUNCHY as a name in single player mode.

PADDED BARRIERS
Enter PADDED as a name in single player mode.

APOCALYPSE

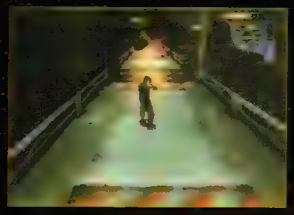
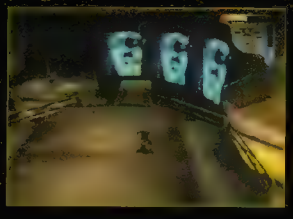
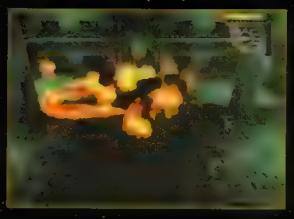
Plenty of help here if you're having trouble guiding Bruce 'where's my hair gone?' Willis through this action-packed blaster.

LEVEL SELECT
Pause the game, hold L1 and press ○, ↑, ⊗, ↓.
Do it right and you'll hear a gunshot. Exit the game and go to the main menu.

ALL WEAPONS
Pause the game, hold L1 and press □, ○, ↑, ↓, ⊗, ○.
Wait for the gunshot and they're all yours.

INFINITE LIVES
Pause the game, hold L1 and press ○, ○, ⊗, ○.
Another gunshot will tell you you've done it right.

REFILL HEALTH
Pause the game, hold L1 and press □, ⊗, ○, ○.
And on the sound of the gunshot, you'll get your health back.

ACTUA SOCCER 3

A couple of quick secrets to get even more out of this great game.

BONUS TEAMS
Enter PREM CLUBS at the team creation screen to unlock 24 more teams.

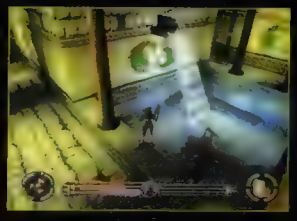
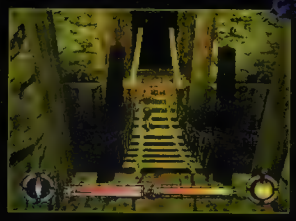
JOKE TEAMS
Enter TFF TEAMS at the team creation screen to unlock 24 funny teams.

O.D.T

FULL ENERGY
Pause the game and press ←, →, ←, →, ○.

FULL AMMUNITION
Pause the game and press ←, →, ↑, ↓, ○, ○.

FULL MANA
Pause the game and press ←, →, ←, →, ○.

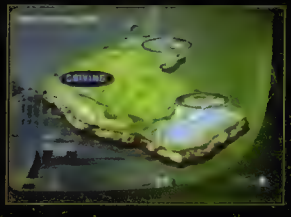



TIGER WOODS '99

For when the pressures of golf get too much, it's nice to know you can relax a bit with these little secrets.

When playing a game in multi-player mode, press ⊗, ○, △, ○, L1, L2, R1, or R2 during an opponent's turn to taunt them.

EXPLODING RANGE CART
On the Driving Range of the practice section, hit the golf range cart three times and it will explode.



PSYBADEK

Armed with this selection of codes you won't have any bother getting more out of the game. Simply enter all these codes as passwords.

LEVEL SELECT - GOANYWHERE
INVINCIBILITY - DONDACHAOS
NINE LIVES - DONTDIONME
INFINITE JELLY WOBBLE - JELLYJELLY
FASTER DEK - DEKPOWERUP
SLOWER DEK - CLAPPEDOUT
BIG XAKO - INLILLIPUT
SMALL XAKO - SIZOFANANT
EXTRA SLIDE - GREASEDDEK
LOW GRAVITY - WALKONMOON
UPSIDE DOWN WORLD - TOPSYTURVY

NHL '99

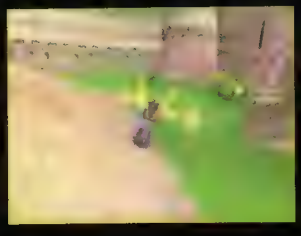
Another selection of passwords ranging from the silly to the not-so-silly.

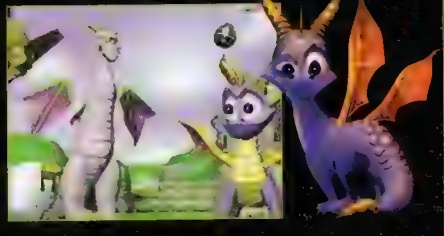
BONUS TEAMS
Enter FREEEA as a password. Then, the EA Blades and EA Storm teams will be selectable. If these two teams are matched up together, fights will constantly break out.

ENABLE EA BLADES TEAM - EAEAO
BIG HEADS - BRAINY
BIG PLAYERS - BIGBIG
WEAR ALTERNATE JERSEYS (IF AVAILABLE) - 3RD
FASTER GAME PLAY - SPEED
VIEW ENDING FMV SEQUENCE - VICTORY
VIEW STADIUM APPROACH SEQUENCES - DET for Detroit, BOS for Boston, COL for Colorado and other three letter city combinations for other approach sequences.
ALTERNATE SCORING SOUNDS - After scoring a goal, press ⓐ to hear various sounds and hold ⓐ to play the current sound.

SPYRO THE DRAGON

NINETY-NINE LIVES
Pause the game, enter the 'Inventory' menu, and press ⓡ, ⓡ, ↑, ⓡ, ←, ⓡ, →, ⓡ.





METAL GEAR SOLID

It's not even on the shelves yet, but STATION have already taken the year's hottest game to pieces. Here's all those added bonuses the manual won't tell you about...

HUMOROUS MERYL COMMENTS:
Look at Meryl with the scope or camera.

BOX DESTINATIONS:
Equip a box while inside the truck to travel to the destination on the tag.

ANNOY CAMBELL:
Snipe the rats above where you first encounter Wolf or shoot the ravens during your second encounter with Raven.

PASSING THE TORTURE ROOM:
When in the torture room, have a friend tap ⓡ on controller two while you do the same on controller one.

DEFEAT PSYCHO MANTIS:
Plug the controller into port two and press any button before fighting Psycho Mantis. 'Hideo' will appear in the corner of a black screen. Use controller two to fight against Mantis to prevent him knowing your moves. Alternatively, shoot the statues in the top corners with the fa-mas and disable his psychic abilities.

SEEING THROUGH PSYCHO MANTIS' EYES:
Press ⓐ when fighting Psycho Mantis to see things from his perspective.

OPEN SOME DOORS WITHOUT A KEY:
Sometimes, you will be able to get the guards to open locked doors for you – just entice them close to the door and they should go through.

ANNOY VULCAN RAVEN:
Shoot the ravens outside of the second elevator, then move on to fight Vulcan. You should be shown another sequence about why you shouldn't kill the birds.

FIND THE PISTOL:
When starting the level with the search lights, go to the closest entrance for the lights. Wait for the search lights to stop moving. When they begin again, enter the search light area, go to the left, and get out of the lights again. Then, move straight ahead to a truck with two cameras and guards. The pistol should be in the back of the truck. There should also be a box that may be used for hiding. A word of warning though: if you are spotted, someone will begin to hurl grenades in your direction.

EASY VULCAN RAVEN AND SECOND SNIPER WOLF KILL:
Use the stinger when facing these two. It will track them even when out-of-sight. When facing Vulcan Raven, get in an outer corner and wait until he comes into sight. Fire, then run to another outer corner and repeat.

Alternatively, you could take out Vulcan Raven by placing claymores around the board and simply letting him walk into them. Lure him to the places that the claymores were planted by getting him to follow you.

USING WEAPONS IN THE NUCLEAR WARHEAD STORAGE ROOM:
You cannot use weapons inside the nuclear warhead storage room so fire in from the exterior instead. Use the PSG-1 to snipe the guards from under the door before going back inside.

ID BLURRED BLOCKS:
To identify the blurred blocks on the soldier that Meryl knocked out and the blur that is on the soldier going to the bathroom, just get as close to the blur as possible. Then use the scope and zoom in as far as possible.

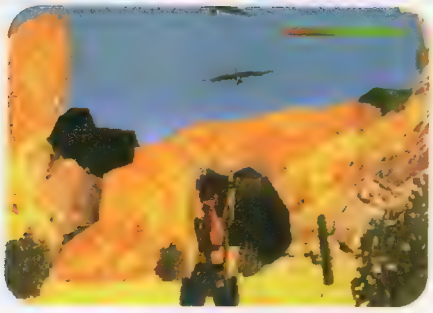
URINATING WOLVES:
Go to the cave after defeating Psycho Mantis. Catch up with Meryl near the entrance to Sniper Wolf. Slap her, then quickly get into a cardboard box. Meryl will command the wolves to attack but instead they will walk over and urinate on the cardboard box that your character is in.

TOMB RAIDER III

ADVENTURES OF LARA CROFT

Having successfully completed the India and London levels, Lara must now undertake tasks in the South Pacific, Nevada Desert and Antarctica. Following the STATION guide will ensure her victory over the sinister Dr. Willard, and a few more artefacts to add to her collection.

PART 2



Last month we left you standing over the defeated Sofia, having traversed the dangerous streets of London. Now, we take up the baton, go transatlantic and head for hotter climes in the USA.

NEVADA

NEVADA DESERT

The sparse dry desert is the setting for the first of Lara's outings in Nevada. The arid landscape is home to many nasty creatures all willing to take a bite out of the adventurer's pert behind.

After sliding down the slope you come to rest in a small canyon area. Walk forward and you're attacked by two vultures, kill these guys but don't venture too far ahead as there's a rattlesnake near the three bushes. Kill the rattler, go around to the right, shoot the second rattler and collect the rockets. Go back and round to the right past the water and into the cave. Enter the passage at the end and push the block. Collect the Shotgun Shells and climb the steps. Slide down the slope and jump at the bottom to reach the ledge opposite. Run-jump the next gap and vault up to the right. Go to the right when you exit the cave and a Stealth Bomber passes overhead. Go to the end and run-jump to the ledge on your right. Go to the end and kill the rattler in the bush. Jump across the ledges until you reach the end. Run off the end and go round to the right and pick up the Large Medi Pack. Go back round and stand on the highest part of the ledge. Run-jump out towards the rocky section in the middle of the area and grab the edge. Climb up and walk along to reach a flooded shaft. Jump in and swim through the tunnel. Climb out at the end and run through to the water-filled ravine. Jump into the water below and collect the Uzi Clips and Flares on the river bed. Climb out directly below the ledge where you entered the area and vault up to the right. Run-jump across the river to the other side (don't try to grab or you won't make it). Jump onto the ledge to the right and collect the Shotgun Shells behind the pillar. Run-jump across the river again and climb up the wall back to the first ledge.

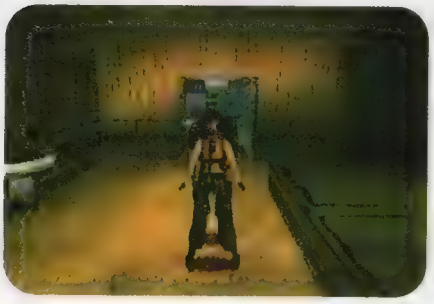
Run-jump to the small ledge to the right then use a standing jump to reach the ledge next to it. Watch out for the vulture waiting to attack. Run-jump to the next ledge and make your way to the end. Vault up the two steps and then run-jump to the ledge behind you. Collect the Uzi Clips and drop back down to the ledge below. Run-jump from the higher step and grab the ledge opposite. Climb up and go left and jump over to the ledge by the bush. Carefully climb up and shoot the rattler on the other side of the bush. Jump to the ledge around the corner and watch two more bombers fly past. Hop backwards off the edge facing outwards and then grab hold of it. Drop to the gap below and shimmy to the left and climb up. Monkey swing from here so you're flat against the rock face to the right, let go and grab the wall. Climb to the left and up and onto the ledge above. Collect the Savegame Crystal and save your game. Collect the Small Medi Pack in the cave and note the plunger. Go back out and jump onto the slope to the right of the ledge, when you slide down grab the edge. Climb down and drop to reach the opening below. Jump and grab the wall next to the waterfall, climb to the top then backflip to the ledge behind you. Use a standing jump and grab the platform above the river, slide down the other side and jump to the ledge straight in front of you. Collect the Small Medi Pack and then grab the crack so that you can shimmy to the right into the cave. Drop off at the end and backflip onto the ledge behind. Run-jump across the ledges, avoiding the water and making your way around the corner. Go around to the far side of the large water wheel and kill the engineer that runs at you. Climb up the side of the wheel and run along the walkway at the top. This route leads you to a dam. In this area you're attacked by a couple of vultures plus a few rattlesnakes lying about. Dive into the pool at the base of the dam and pull the lever in the corner. Dive through the open gate and pull another lever. Follow the passage and pull a third lever before you climb out. Flick the switch at the end and slide down the dam. Climb out and head back to the waterwheel, climb down and go through the passage in the corner. Kill the engineer and collect the Detonator Switch. Pick up the Savegame Crystal and save your game. Remember the plunger? Yep, head all the way back to it.

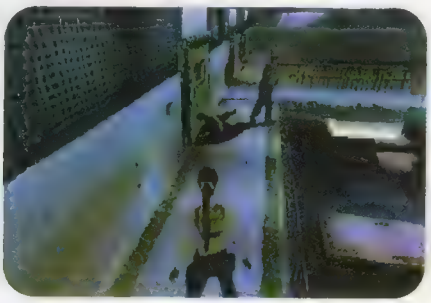
BLAST OFF

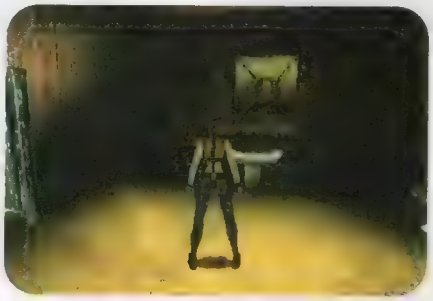
Use the Detonator Switch with the plunger to set off the TNT in the cave. Quickly jump to one side to avoid the boulder rolling over the plunger. Go down into the cave and vault onto the rock to the left. Jump to the ledge on your right then run-jump to the triangular ledge behind you. Jump across to the left and then vault up into the gap. This leads you to a compound area.

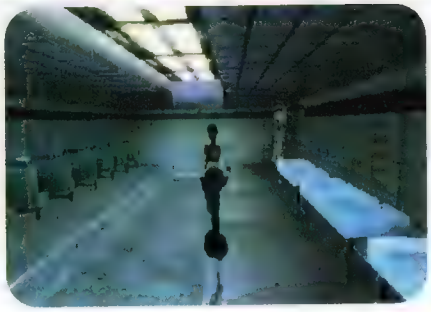
THE COMPOUNDS

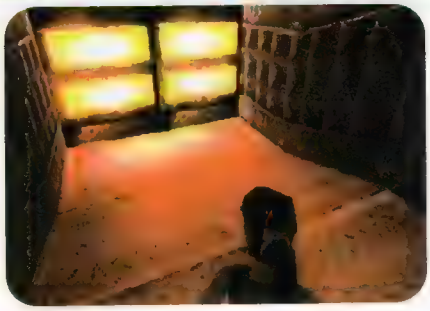
Head down the right-hand side of the compound and enter the gap in the rock. Follow the passage until you find a gap in the floor. Jump over and onto the higher ledge and get into the water. Go to the right, pull the underwater lever and climb out again. Go back to the compound and head into the cave on the left. When you reach the other side kill the two rattlers, go into the hut on the right and hit the switch. Once again, head back to the compound and enter the gap in the rock. This time drop down the gap and enter the water tower area. Kill the two engineers and climb up the leg of the tower. Swim through the door in the corner and pull the lever. Turn around and swim back into the tower. Climb out of the water and run-jump from the open door into the compound. Go to the far building and hop on the quad bike. There are a few engineers in here. Drive out of the building and turn left. Drive up onto the roof of the other building and pick up the Generator Access. Drive back down and enter the building you've just been on top of. Use the Generator Access in the lock and go through the door. Kill the bloke here and flip the switch to turn off the electric fence. Go back to the quad bike and drive to the main gate. Open the gate and head for the cave to the left.











Stop on the other side and turbo up the rock so that you can jump over the fence.

APPREHENDED

Unfortunately Lara doesn't quite make it over the fence. She clips it with the wheels of the quad bike, sending her flying over the handlebars. As she lands with a hefty bump she's knocked out cold on the rocks. A couple of MPs turn up and cart her off to a secure cell.

HIGH SECURITY COMPOUND

After her attempted break in, Lara finds herself in a locked cell with all her items confiscated. The first task is to get her out.

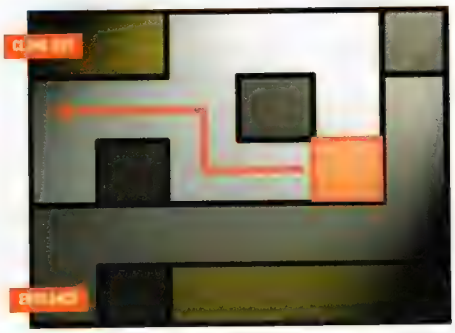
Hop onto the window ledge and an MP will come through the door, run past him to get out. Press the switches on the left to open the other cells to free the prisoners, these guys will kill the MP for you. Cross the bridge and free the other prisoners. Enter the cell at the end of the walkway. Jump into the opening above the sink and push the block forward. Crawl through the gap on the left and push the next block forward. Now push the block on your right to reveal a ledge up above. Follow the path to the end, taking care through the barbed wire. Hit the switch at the end and vault onto the ledge to the left. Hop off and grab the edge so that you hang above the open trapdoor. Climb down the ladder and go to the left part way down. Drop into the opening and follow the passage until you fall through a trapdoor. Quickly jump back up and continue along. Drop through the trapdoor at the end and flick the switch in the computer area. This will release the prisoners who'll kill the MP nearby. Find the body and pick up the Keycard Type A, use this to open the large gate to Bay D.

BAY D

Go straight ahead and turn left at the end. Enter the room (push the button to open the door) and go through the door in the corner. In this room move the block so that you can climb into the ceiling, (use our map). Press the switch and go back into the room below which is now flooded. Swim through the other hole in the ceiling in the far corner and climb out. Carefully walk towards the light and jump over the gap above the cooker. Go to the far end of the roof and drop into the hole, hit the switch around to the left and then go back to the cooker. Drop into the kitchen and collect the Small Medi Pack from the ledge opposite. Open the door and go outside. Open the two doors here and run back to the entrance to Bay D so the prisoners can kill the MP. Collect the Small Medi Pack from his body and go back to the kitchen area. Enter the green coloured room and press the button to lift the barriers in the kitchen. Save your game here then climb up to the fans and collect the Savegame Crystal. Slide down the centre of the slope backwards, grab the edge then shimmy left and drop down. Vault up and go through to the ladder, climb up and go to the left. Drop onto the ledge and a prisoner above you will open a trapdoor. Climb the ladder to reach Bay E.

BAY E

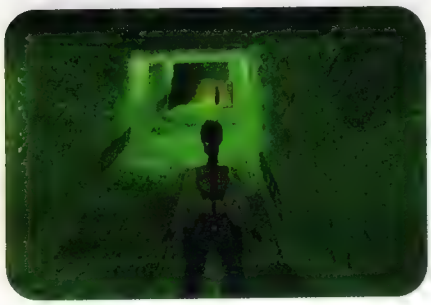
Go to the right at the end of the corridor and climb up the wall to the top. Wait for the MP to walk across the top before running up and to the right. Go past the crate and around to the left, drop down the steps and push the button. Follow the prisoner and he'll kill the MP, collect the Keycard Type B from his body. Open the door along to the right of the crate then collect the Small Medi Pack and Uzi Clips. Press the switch on the wall and go out and past the crate again. Go right and climb down the ladder around the corner. Go to the left and open the door on the left, two prisoners will run out and kill an MP in the yard outside. Collect the Yellow Security Pass from the body of the dead MP and open the doorway at the far end of the yard. Follow the passage until you reach a slope, crawl through the gap to the right and hit the switch at the end to turn on the laser. Catch the MP in the laser to kill him. Avoid the laser and go through the door to the satellite dish.

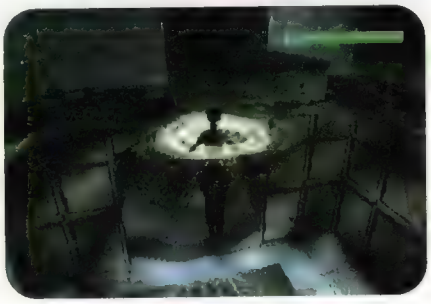


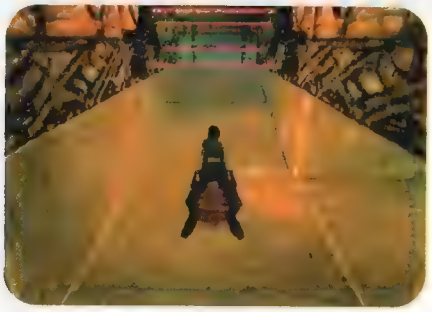
BAY C – SATELLITE DISH

Go up the steps and around to the far side, drop onto the small ledge below the walkway and jump up into the opening. Drop into the control room, press the button to move the dish. Exit the room and head back to the dish. Go up to the dish then save your game. Drop into the water below and make your way back to the surface, but don't stray too close to the central hole.

Climb onto the small ledge and jump up to the slope to your right. Jump across the ledges around the edge to reach the small gap on the far side. Follow the passage and hit the switch at the end. Go back to the water, dive in then swim through the tunnel in the corner. Collect the Small Medi Pack then crawl through the narrow gap at the end. Climb out when the MP goes to the left and run to the right. Go through the door and close it. Climb the ladder and go to the opposite side of the dish then climb the ladder. Go right and climb into the gap by the door, pick up the Yellow Security Pass and go back to the dish and climb down the first ladder. Go along the passage, away from the door, and use the Yellow Security Pass in the switch unit. Go back up to the dish and drop into the water. Swim through the central opening at the bottom and collect the Savegame Crystal. Open the door at the end using the lever, collect the Flares and Small Medi Pack then swim to the surface avoiding the lasers. Climb







out, jump over the lasers and enter the next water passage. Crawl through the gap to reach the next area.

LOADING BAY

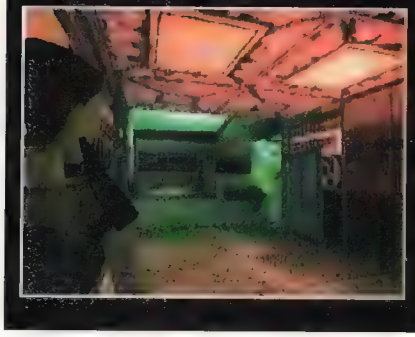
Vault up onto the crates to the left and you'll find a door on the other side. Enter the door and pick up a Large Medi Pack, Pistols and the Desert Eagle with its Clips. Go back out and you'll find that an automatic gun has been activated, avoid the lasers and go back to the main room. Head up to the right and kill all of the MPs and pick up the Blue Security Pass that one of them drops. Climb the ladder at the top of the slope and use the pass in the unit around the corner. Enter the door here and kill the MP. Press both of the buttons on the wall and go back down the ladder. Kill the MP and the dog then head down the slope. Vault onto the crate in the main room and climb to the ledge above. Grab the mesh above and monkey swing to the centre of the room then over to the right. Climb up to the area above and shoot the MP. Pick up the Yellow Security Pass he drops and the Savegame Crystal from the far side. Go back down to the room below and use the Yellow Security Pass to open the large gate. Head into the next area and kill the MP in the yard then enter the warehouse. Kill the MP here and get into the back of the truck.

AREA 51

Area 51 is well known for being a high security military base which has birthed many rumours. Lara's about to find out if they are true.

STOWAWAY

When Lara investigates the crates on board the truck she is disturbed by two men. Hiding behind a large crate she watches as the two men close the rear doors of the truck, locking her in. The truck pulls away with Lara trapped inside. Its destination? Area 51!



Climb over the crate to the left as you exit the truck and collect the Small Medi Pack. You'll be attacked by a lone MP so be prepared. Go to the left and enter the small room at the end then pick up the MP5 and Desert Eagle Clips. Exit the room and hit the button around the corner. Climb through the gap and head to the right, avoiding the laser. Climb up the ladder and crawl through the hole. Quickly kill the MP to the right, if the lasers have been activated then crawl under the first three and go through the passage to the right. If the lasers aren't active then go through the doorway at the end. Go through this small room avoiding the lasers. Shoot the MP at the far end and enter the room on the right. Pick up the Harpoons, Rocket and Grenades. Go back to the hallway and turn right. Flick the switch by the gate and drop through the door. Shoot the MP in the area to the left. Collect the Grenade Launcher from the gap just left of the trapdoor and then drop into the pit surrounding the main building. Hit the switch and drop through the trapdoor in the corner. Kill the MP and crawl through the gap. Collect the MP5 Clips on the right and drop through the trapdoor. Kill the MP in the corridor then go towards the blue end and crawl through the gap on the left. Pick up the Large Medi Pack and continue. Go to the left and around the corner, kill the MP and press the button at the far end. Go back and to the left, the doors in front of you will close and the ones either side will open. Kill the MPs and go through the left-hand set of doors. Flick the switch and go to the other side. Crawl through the gap and kill the MP as you run up the slope.

MISSILE SILO

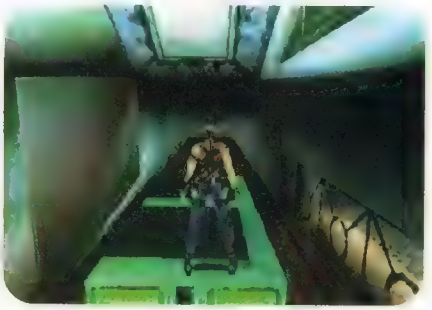
Go to the right at the split and kill the MP on the other side of the large missile. Drop down and climb up the ladder to collect the Code Clearance Disk from his body. Go back to the spit and take the other route. Go to the far side of the room avoiding the green lasers. Use the Code Clearance Disk in the computer on the right to hoist the missiles. Stand on the conveyor below the missiles and jump over to the ladder on the wall. Kill the MP in the far corner and go across to get the Hanger Access Key from him. Head back to the large missile and go through the passage at the bottom. Go past the hole in the floor and use the Hanger Access Key in the unit around the corner. Enter the door and shoot the MP to the left before he notices you. Drop down to where he was stood and go to the left. Climb up the ladder and press the button at the top. Climb back down and crawl under the rail then head back up the tunnel. Climb up the ladder on the right then pick up the Shotgun. From here jump onto the monorail train. Walk to the front and jump up to the ledge above. Stop when you reach the second section of grilled floor and save your game. Jump up and monkey swing across. Make sure you avoid the lasers and drop back onto the floor. Drop down at the end and jump over the electric rail. Run up the slope over to the left and kill the MP on the way up and at the top. Carefully jump over the green lasers and go around the corner. Vault over the crates and enter the room on the other side.

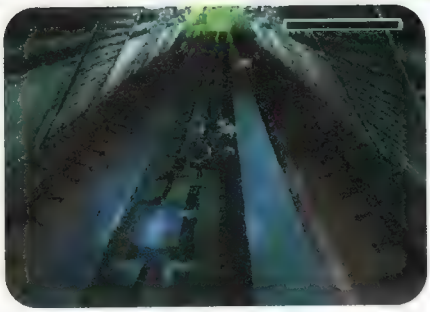
THE DOUBLE DOORS

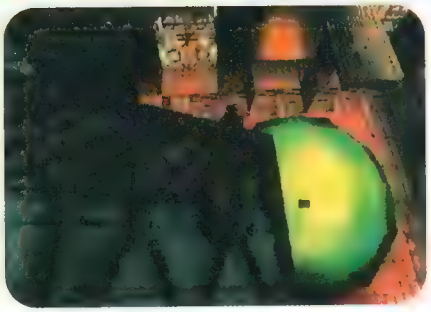
Quickly kill the MP and then climb onto the control desk in the middle of the room. Jump up to the walkway on the left, press the button to open the door. You have to do the same on the other side of the room to open the other door then quickly run in. The first time you press each button an MP will appear in the room below. Once in the next room kill the MP and then hit all five switches. Exit through the small door to land back in the previous room.

BLAST OFF

Go back out and over the crates then enter the hanger through the doors on the right. Push the button next to the ladder and climb up to the top. Back-flip to the ledge behind you and turn around then save your game. Jump across the sloping sections (go around to the right) to reach the platform to the left. Drop onto the UFO and pick up the Launch Code Pass. Drop down







off the UFO and head all the way back towards the large missile again. Drop down the hole you reach just before the missile. Use the switch to open the door at the end then go around to the right. Use the Launch Code Pass in the unit on the left and then go around the corner. Press the button and quickly run through the door behind you and up to the far wall. When the missile has taken off go back to the room it was in and climb to the very top. Kill the MP and hit the switch to open the door. Crawl through the gap and jump over the laser unit and continue through. When you get outside kill the MP on the tower then shoot the one on the ground. Go to the right and kill the MP in the small room, pick up the Code Clearance Disk from his body. Hit the switch here and go back into the yard and drop through the open trapdoor. Avoid the laser and climb down the wall at the end. Head left at the bottom and make your way to the UFO again.

Go into the room behind the UFO and use the Code Clearance Disk in the computer on the left. Enter the door to the room behind you and collect the Savegame Crystal. Go back to the main hanger and jump up inside the UFO. Climb up again and kill the MP. Climb up to the next part and quickly pick up Element 115 to finish this adventure.

SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS

COASTAL VILLAGE

Lara starts her Pacific adventure swimming in a tropical blue lagoon. There's no time to top up her tan though, 'cause there's artefacts to find.

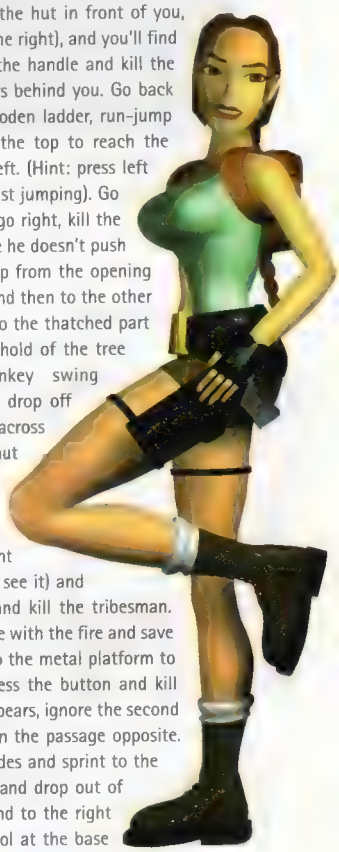
As soon as you start the level, head to the immediate right and swim into the small cove. Dive down and collect the Smuggler's Key from the square platform on the sea bed. Swim out of the cove and head for the shore. Go along the shoreline to the left and you'll come across a hut in the cliff side. Enter the hut and use the Smuggler's Key in the lock to open the trapdoor in the floor. Drop down and collect the Savegame Crystal. Carefully walk forward and four spikes will shoot out of the wall, crawl under these and continue. Shoot the crocodiles and tribesman up above with your pistols (to save ammo) and then jump across the platforms in front of you. Monkey swing across the water (using the vines overhead) and drop down on the far side. Jump across to the right and follow the ledge along. Vault up onto the next ledge up and run-jump to the green platform behind you. From here monkey swing all the way to the right and drop onto the bridge. Go across the bridge and jump onto the sloping ledge to the left, quickly jump off at the bottom to land on the next ledge along. Run-jump over the spikes and grab the wooden ladder, quickly climb to the top and shoot the tribesman to the right. Drop off backwards and grab the top of the ladder, now shimmy to the left and collect the Savegame Crystal. Run off the end of the platform and land on the ledge below, shimmy left along the edge of this ledge. Jump to the next ledge and enter the passage.

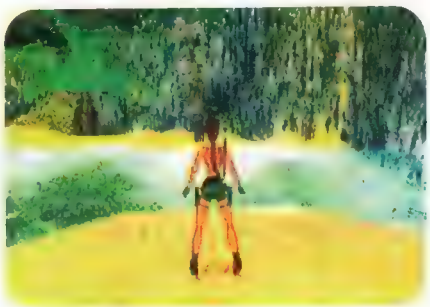
SUNLIT HALL

Cross the rope bridge and enter the building on the other side. Kill the tribesman and then CRAWL around to the left. When you enter the large hall go around to the right and press the switch to shut the window, this deactivates the traps in this half of the room. Collect the Large Medi Pack and jump across to the far side. Collecting the Savegame Crystal will activate poison darts so be careful. Slide down the slope here to the village outside.

THE VILLAGE

Save your game and go straight ahead through the village killing any tribesmen you meet. Go between the rock face and the hut and you'll come to a large area of quick sand. Jump onto the rock to the left to reach the end of the brick building. Kill the tribesman here and turn the handle attached to the rope. Go back to the village and turn right as you enter. Collect the Savegame Crystal in the corner and then go around the other side of the hut you're stood next to. This will lead you to the trapdoors you've just raised. Go across the trapdoors and into another part of the village, head left and vault onto the rock to the right of the wooden ladder. Enter the hut in front of you, (the door is round to the right), and you'll find another handle. Turn the handle and kill the tribesman that appears behind you. Go back out and climb the wooden ladder, run-jump from the window at the top to reach the ledge around to the left. (Hint: press left in mid air to turn whilst jumping). Go into the passage and go right, kill the tribesman making sure he doesn't push you into the fire. Jump from the opening onto the nearby hut and then to the other hut beyond. Jump onto the thatched part of the roof and grab hold of the tree branch above. Monkey swing across the spikes and drop off at the very end. Run across the roof to the next hut and then jump into the hut to the right. Press the switch on the far wall (you might need to use a flare to see it) and quickly turn around and kill the tribesman. Go back to the passage with the fire and save your game. Jump onto the metal platform to reach the far end. Press the button and kill the tribesman that appears, ignore the second switch and head down the passage opposite. Avoid the circular blades and sprint to the end. Turn the handle and drop out of the window. Go around to the right and jump into the pool at the base





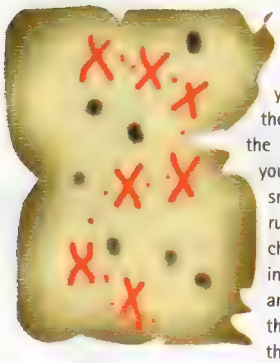
CRASH VICTIM

When Lara enters the hut she finds an Aussie gent with a missing leg. With the usual tact of the folk from below, he requests that Lara doesn't use his hut for a 'dunny'. He goes on to explain that he and some other men were involved in a plane crash high up on the mountain. He's been captured by the tribesmen to be used as some sort of sacrifice, in other words he's going to be the main course at tea. After Lara asks about crossing the swamp he gives her a map to show her the right route to take.

of the waterfall. Swim through the trapdoor and to the end of the passage, be quick as there's a croc down here. Climb the ladder and continue until you reach the end. Jump across to the balcony and enter the hut to find an injured man...

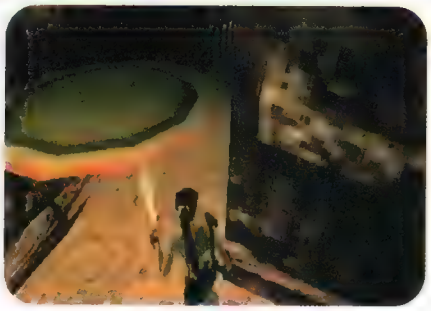
CRASH SITE

Lara has to now cross the swamp, use the map to find out which leaves to jump onto. The correct leaves are solid and you won't sink. Once across the swamp head down into the small misty basin. When you get near the bottom a small dinosaur will come running at you, make this chap extinct quickly to avoid injury. Go along to the right and enter the cave. Climb up the rocks and drop down in the other side. Here you'll find the crashed 'plane and another dinosaur to kill.



CRASHED 'PLANE

Go around the front of the plane and down to the rear. Here you'll see two soldiers fighting off some dinosaurs. Run down and help them out, but don't kill the soldiers because they're on your side. Go through the passage to the right of the bridge and you'll find more soldiers with a couple more dinosaurs. Climb up the rocks to the right then shin up the vine covered wall. Back-flip onto the slope behind you and almost immediately jump to the tree branch. Quickly kill the dinosaur before he knocks you off. Jump onto the sloping ledge again and grab the edge of it. Shimmy to the right and climb up, jump onto the small ledge to the right and then up onto the tree branch on your right. Collect the Savegame Crystal and save your progress. Jump back onto the branch and kill the dinosaur on the other side of the tree. Shoot the dinosaur hanging on the chain so that it drops into the water below. Whilst the piranhas are busy chewing on the carcass dive into the river and pull the lever nearby. Climb out of the river by the temple entrance. Kill the dinosaur and head through the gate.



THE DARK ROOMS

As you enter the first dark room you'll be greeted by another dinosaur so keep your gun drawn. There are three levers in this room, pull each one and kill the dinosaurs that you release. Jump onto the block and climb up to the room above. Pick up Lt. Tuckerman's Key from his dead body in the corner. Now go back to the 'plane area.

Go into the passage to the left of the 'plane and pick up Desert Eagle Clips. Go into the room at the end and you'll find more Desert Eagle Clips and a Large Medi Pack. Kill the small green dinosaurs if they attack you. Pull the two levers in the alcoves on the left- and right-hand side of the room and then go back outside.

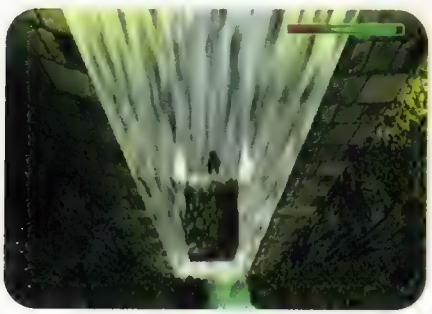
TYRANNOSAURUS REX

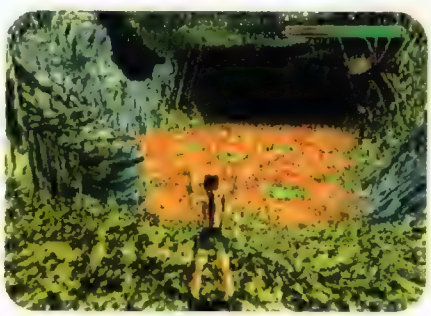
Go towards the front of the 'plane and drop into the passage through the opening in the rock face. When you reach a large cavern you'll find a soldier and two dinosaurs. Help him kill the dinosaurs then slide down slope. Kill the little green dinos then pick up Commander Bishop's Key from the nest at the far end of the cavern. You'll now have to face the rather large T-Rex that appears at the other end. Keep moving and avoid his jaws, as they will kill you instantly. Head for the far end of the cavern and pull the lever in the alcove at the base of the slope. Go back towards the nest and you'll find another lever on the left, pull this and go back to the first lever. Go left up the steps and kill the smaller dinosaur to save the soldier again. The soldier will then run down and attack the T-Rex, stand at the top of the slope and help him kill it. When you've finished go back outside to the 'plane.

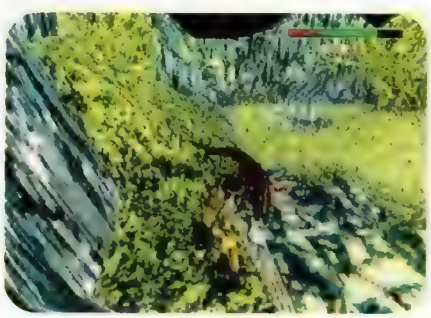
Go around the front of the 'plane and round to the other side. Go towards the rear of the 'plane and you'll find a dark corner to the left. Climb onto the small, grey triangular platform and jump onto the ledge above it. Monkey swing, parallel with the 'plane, from the tree branch above (it has metal loops in it). Go around and climb up the tree trunk and monkey swing again. Drop down when you reach the end and stand above the vertical gap in the rock. Climb down the rock-face here and shimmy across the bottom to the left. Climb up and crawl through the gap. Use the platform so you can monkey swing from the ceiling. Stop just before entering the next room and drop down.

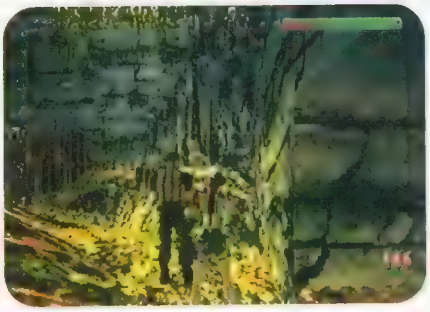
MONKEY SWING ROOM

Drop to the ledge below and pull the lever situated around the corner. Climb back up and monkey swing across the room and climb into the opening. Pull the lever here and then jump onto the central platform to









collect the Savegame Crystal. Save your game then jump over to the first lever and pull it again. Climb up and monkey swing across the room but go to the left this time and keep moving until you reach the red grill. Climb down the wall, just before the grill, until you reach the bottom. Back-flip off and pull the lever in this small area. Jump back onto the wall and climb up to the right into the gap. From here you have to run-jump to the slope beneath the second switch then jump to the platform where the Savegame Crystal was. Once you're there you can jump across and climb up so that you can monkey swing all the way round and back outside. Run-jump to the tree branch in front of you, and run across the wing of the 'plane to reach the hole on its roof.

INSIDE 'PLANE

Jump into the 'plane and enter the cockpit, use Commander Bishop's Key and Lt. Tuckerman's Key in the two locks. Go towards the rear of the 'plane and drop into the cargo hold below. Go back to the front and flick the switch to move the gun turret. Go out the rear of the plane and use the turret to kill the many dinosaurs that attack you. After the onslaught shoot the gun at the far left-hand corner to break the wall. Go over to the wing to your left and jump off of the end to reach the far side. Go into the right-hand section and pick up the Large Medi Pack and the Savegame Crystal. Don't save your game, but go into the other section to find a curious engraving...

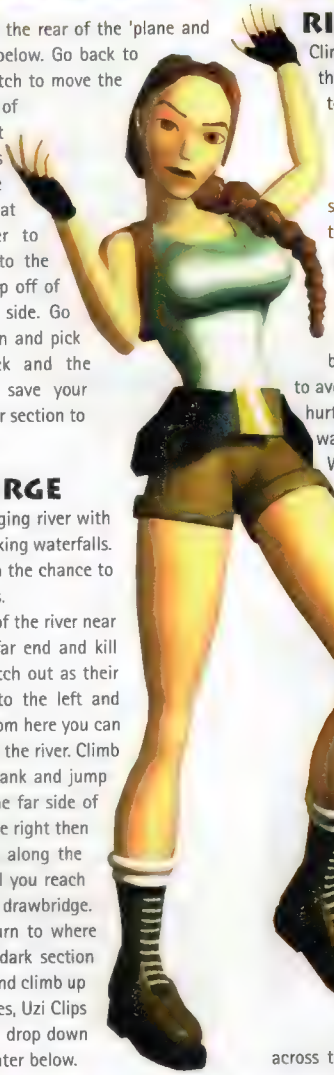
THE ENGRAVING

Lara discovers an engraved wall but is disturbed by a tribesman. He sees Lara as a tasty meal but doesn't get his way, he does, however, answer her questions concerning his ancestors and the engravings on the wall. With her curiosity fulfiled she wanders off into the darkness.

MADUBU GORGE

The gorge is home to a raging river with white rapids and breath taking waterfalls. These waters will give Lara the chance to test out her kayaking skills.

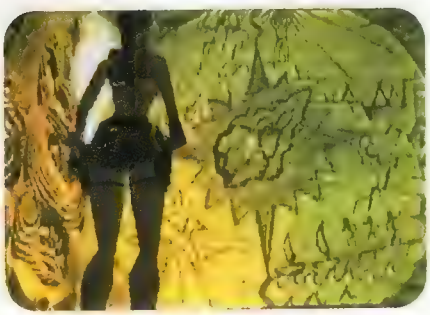
You start on the bank of the river near a drawbridge, go to the far end and kill the two green lizards, watch out as their breath is poisonous. Go to the left and stand on the river bank, from here you can see a rock in the middle of the river. Climb down the ledges by the bank and jump onto the rock. Jump to the far side of the river and shimmy to the right then climb up. Make your way along the bank going upstream until you reach a button just beyond the drawbridge. Press the button and return to where you started. Go into the dark section under the stone building and climb up inside. Pick up the Grenades, Uzi Clips and Small Medi Pack then drop down the other hole into the water below.

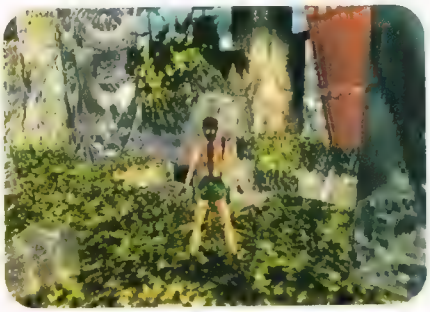


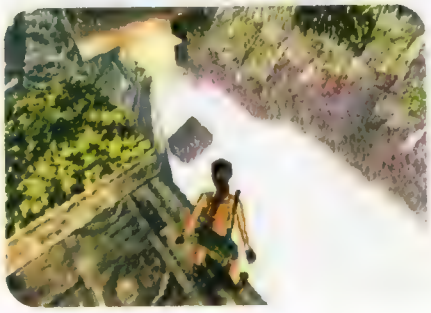
RIDE THE RAPIDS

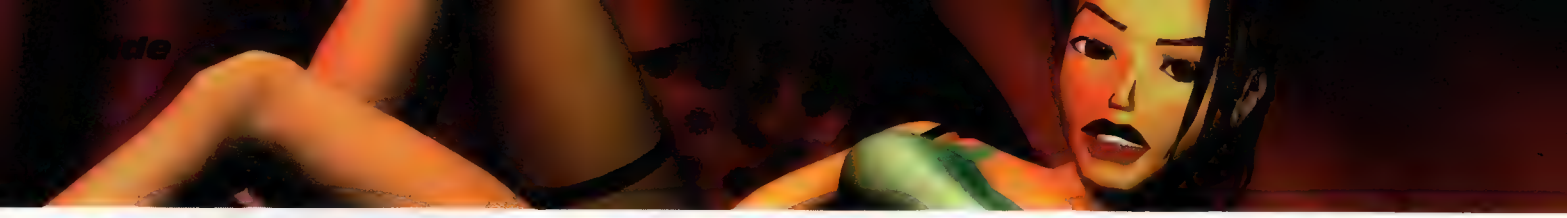
Climb into the Kayak and gently paddle out onto the river. Go with the flow to start with and try to collect the Savegame Crystal a little way down. When you reach the calmer water you'll find a set of blades blocking your path, paddle through the green rope beneath the small waterfall to deactivate them. Go down the next section of white water and go to the right, you'll have to paddle like crazy against the current. When you enter the cave go down the right-hand side until you reach the next set of rapids. Go across to the left then back to the right and once more to left, this is to avoid the red rope which activates spikes, which hurt! Take the left-hand route down the steep waterfall and into the pool around the corner. When you enter the pool go to the left and paddle up the rapids on the left. You now enter a pool with a large stone on a chain stuck in the middle. Go up the passage to the far left and paddle up to the quiet pool. There's a croc in here so when you get out of the kayak you have to quickly swim to the shore. Kill the green lizard and the croc if you wish.

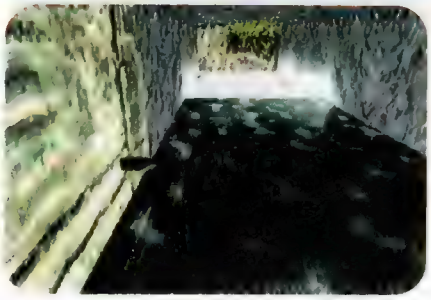
Follow the ledge and you'll end up facing the pool with the large stone. Jump outwards and grab the ceiling, monkey swing all the way to the end dodging the fire on the way. Drop down when you can go no further and run-jump to the platform on the opposite side of the river. Go through into the passage, collect the Rocket and continue. When you rejoin the river go along the shore towards the waterfall, climb up the wall on the right and drop onto the ledge. Monkey swing from here out across the water, again watch out for the fire. Drop

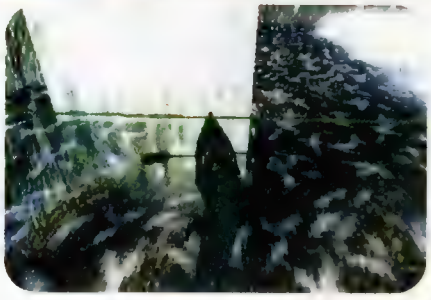












down at the end and head left, upstream. Jump over to the ledge with the blade on it and then run-jump back across the river and grab the wall. Climb all the way up to the left and drop down when you can go no further. Save your game here. Enter the dark passage and climb down the wall to the bottom of the pit.

ROLLING ROCKS

Run up to the step and crouch to avoid the oncoming boulder, do the same for the next and go into the next room. Run across the bridge and quickly jump into the passage on the left to avoid another boulder coming from behind. Do a standing jump over the fire and crouch by the step up ahead to avoid the next boulder. Go to the top of the slope to rejoin the river again. Run-jump to the ledge to the right then climb up the wall. Go as far left as you can go and drop onto the ledge. Crawl through the gap and jump to the rock in the river. Jump to the central island then over to the start of the death slide. Use the slide to reach the small room at the end. Climb the faces on the wall to reach the area above. Go around to the left and pull the lever, a lizard will appear behind you. Go back round and follow the dark passage. Shoot the lizard at the end and go down to the right. Slide down and you'll end up back at your kayak. Climb into the kayak and head back out to the rapids.

THROUGH THE WHIRLPOOL

Enter the whirlpool to land in a calm pool below. Go towards the area with the red gate and climb out of the kayak. Quickly swim to shore and climb up so you can kill the crocodiles in the water. Dive back in and swim under the gate and pull the lever. Swim back up and enter the gate to reach the temple.

TEMPLE OF PUNA

As soon as you entered the temple you'll be attacked by tribesmen. Walk forward and shoot the two dart-chuckers on the right. Keep your gun drawn and head up the steps, shoot the tribesman higher up then climb the big steps. You'll meet another tribesman a little further ahead. Climb through the gap at the very top of the steps and pick up the Small Medi Pack at the end.

BLADED WHEELS

When the wheels roll past to the left, slide down and head right. Press the button on the stone face and turn around. When the wheels roll back towards you jump over them and go to the opposite end. Push the button on the stone face here, keep repeating this until all four buttons have been pressed. Collect the Savegame Crystal and go through the open door to reach safety. Climb over the step and slide down to the room below, ignore the levers and pull the dark coloured block out to stop the ceiling. Now pull the levers to open the door. Go down the passage and drop into the hole.

MASSIVE BOULDER

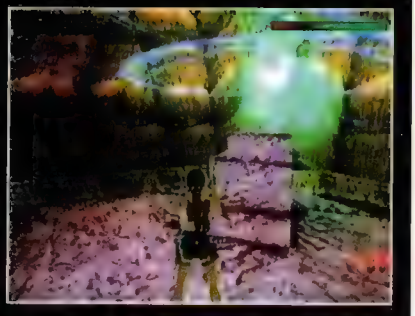
Enter the tunnel and go to the left towards the boulder, here you'll find a lever. Pull the lever and turn around, sprint through the gate at the end and turn right. Once you get under the arch you'll be safe. Crawl back under the boulder to get the Savegame Crystal if you missed it.

You'll now be back at the start but three tribesmen have appeared, two to the left and one to the right. Kill these guys and head around to the right. Save your game then slide down the slope into the throne room. As you approach the throne it will spin round to reveal the boss sat in it.

TEMPLE BOSS

This guy doesn't move from his throne so you don't have to worry about avoiding him, he does however pack a punch in the lightning lobbing department. His lightning will kill you instantly which is a right pain. As well as this he makes lizards appear on either side of you to cause more hassle. Use the Desert Eagle as it has plenty of power with each shot and kills the lizards with only two bullets. The basic method of attack is to keep jumping about and firing when he chucks lightning and kill the lizards when they appear. This boss is very tough so don't expect to beat him first time!

Once defeated the boss will leave the Ora Dagger.



ANTARCTICA

ANTARCTICA

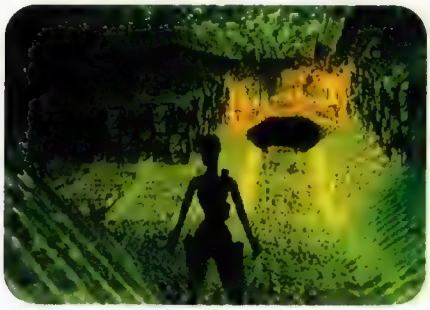
After her ordeal with the helicopter Lara finds her way to an icy cove with a stranded ship.

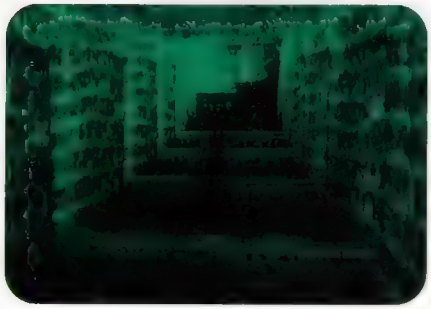
Jump to the platform to the left then run-jump to the shore. Go to the far end, past the hut, and jump into the water. Note that when you are in the water an exposure bar will appear, when this has depleted you will start losing energy. This limits the amount of time you can spend in the water and you also have to get out of the water to recover.

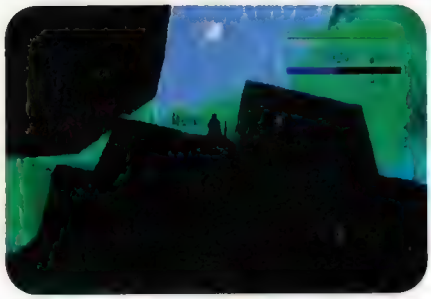
Quickly swim to the next section of shore and get out. Go as far as you can and then swim to the shore next to the bow of the ship. Climb up the ledges to the top of the cliff and monkey swing across towards the ship. Drop down onto the ledge below, when you can go no further, then jump across to the ship's deck.

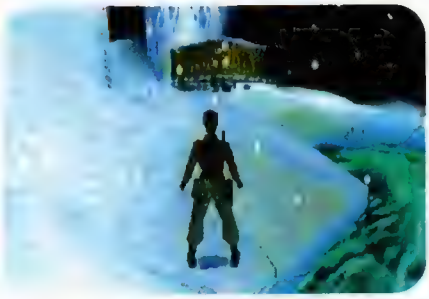
THE RX EXPLORER

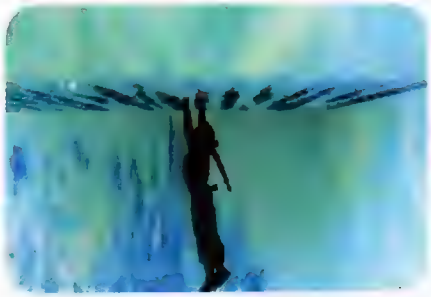
Drop through the hole in the deck and head down the slope, a crew member will attack you at the bottom. Go around to the right











DR WILLARD ONCE AGAIN

Lara enters the hut and is greeted by a familiar face, that of Dr Willard. Lara rumbles his plans to use the artefacts for ill means and refuses to hand them over. The doc pushes the table over, flooring Lara. He grabs her case and legs it with the pieces of meteorite. Lara makes chase but the doctor escapes in a lift to the mines below. Lara hops onto the top of the lift and follows him down.

and into the generator room, another member of the crew will attack you from behind as you enter. Go around behind the generator and pull the lever, turn around and drop down the trapdoor in front of you. Kill the guy you meet here and head down the passage. As you approach the end you'll encounter another bad guy in the alcove on the left. Push the button on the wall and enter the door opposite. Go to the right, kill the chap with the gun and pick up the MP5 Clips. Drop through the hole in the floor and go to the end, another crew member will approach from behind. Climb up and press the button to release the dinghy outside. Go back to where you've just come from and into the room just after the steps. Jump up to the ledge above and head down the passage. Open the door at the end and go back out on deck. Jump off the stern of the ship and climb into the dinghy.

BOAT RIDE

Go around the stern of the ship and down along the side of it then around the bow. Go towards the hut, turn left and go through the cavern. Disembark when you reach the next hut and quickly kill the bad guy. Go to the far side of the hut and climb onto the platform, jump up and grab the metal bars above you. Monkey swing as far as you can go and drop onto the ground. Slide down the small slope and kill the bad guy then follow the passage. Watch out for the dog when you reach the next area and go through the doorway to the right. You'll meet another dog and bad guy just as you go around the corner so have your gun drawn. In the next area go around to the left of the fuel tank and enter the large tunnel. Kill the two dogs on the other side and enter the building in front of you, use the roll action to get through the automatic doors. Go up the steps and kill the two guys in the room above. Go to the far end of the floor and pick up the Crowbar in the small room. Go back to the fuel tank and drop down the hole where the pipe goes underground.

FUEL SUPPLY

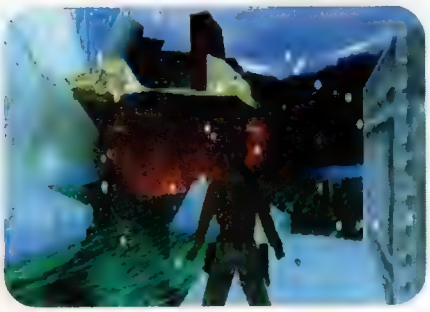
In order to get the fuel flowing you have to open two of the four valves. Turn the second and fourth valves and you'll hear a door opening. Go to the end of the passage and climb up to the generator room. Pull the lever in between the two generators to start them up, this will supply electricity to the rest of the buildings.

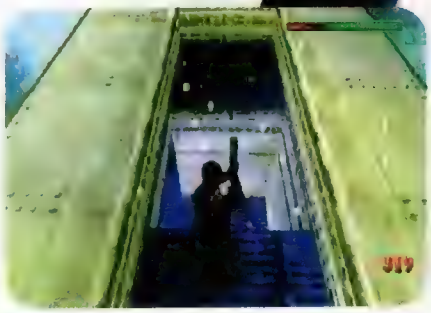
Exit the generator room and go outside then head left through the narrow passage. Open the gate to the kennel and kill the dog, open the second gate and kill the other two dogs. Open the door and enter the building, kill the dog in the main room then pick up the Gate Control Key from the far corner. Kill the bad guy on the way out and go all the way back to the hut next to your dinghy.

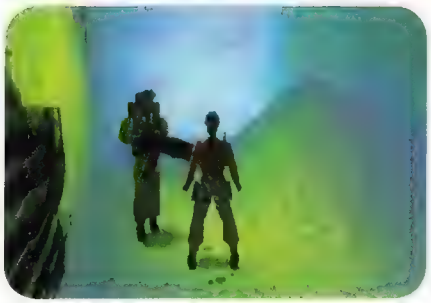
Use the Crowbar to break the plank of wood blocking the door to the hut, enter and use the Gate Control Key in the panel on the wall. Press the button to the left to open the gate. Go outside and get into your dinghy then go through the open gate. Go as far as you can in the dinghy and climb out onto the bank. Climb up to the next area and follow the path taking care not to fall into the lift shaft. Kill the two blokes and head around to the rear of the hut.

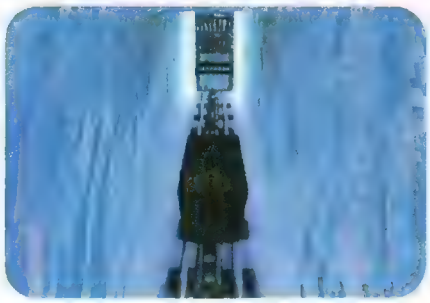
RX-TECH MINES

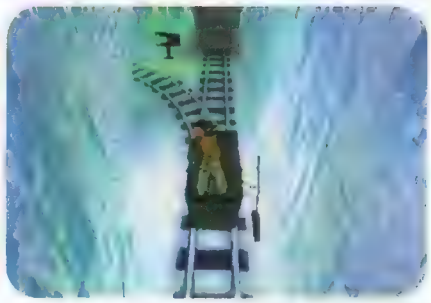
Lara is still on top of the mine elevator at the bottom of the shaft, the only way to go is through the small gap in the shaft wall. This next section involves doors which open as you approach them, if you keep running you'll just end up going in circles. Go through the first three doors and then turn around, go back the other way and you come to a gap on the left of the passage. Crawl through and climb down the wall to the lift below. Pick up the MP5 Clips and then press the button to open up the panel on the wall. Vault up and follow the short passage.











When you drop down, don't worry about the chap with the flame-thrower, he won't hurt you. Go around the corner and enter the mine cart area.

MINE CART RIDE #1

Go down to the lowest level and climb into the mine cart. After the initial climb you have to duck under two beams and then quickly hit the lever to adjust the points. This will take you to the left, keep ducking until you come to a halt. Jump out of the cart and collect the Savegame Crystal, save your game then enter the tunnel on the opposite side of the track. Push the button on the left and quickly go through the door before it closes. Follow the passage as far as it goes and slide down into the room below. Go to the doorway near the end of the room and a large mutant will jump at you. These guys are pretty tough and will incur plenty of damage if you get too close. Once you've killed off the big guy, enter the doorway and follow the passage to the room at the end. Climb up the wall on the left to reach the corridor above. Go to the far door on the right and press the button to open it. Enter the door and go all the way through to the next room. As you approach the door it will open and another mutant jumps through so get ready with the guns. Pick up the Uzi Clips and Small Medi Pack from the mutant's body, then go through the door. Jump into the water by the crane then quickly swim down and pick up the Winch Starter.

Go back into the nearby room and press the button to the left of the gap where you first entered. Yet another mutant comes through the open door for you to kill. Go down the passage and through the door at the end, now jump the gap and open the door on the left. Climb back into the mine cart and set off. Duck under the beam and immediately slam on the brake to get round the next corner safely. Hit the points lever at the top of the next slope so that you go straight ahead and collect a Savegame Crystal. After the next corner you'll be back at the start of the ride.

MINE CART RIDE #2

Hop into the mine cart on the middle level, after the first climb you'll immediately head down and across a gap. Keep your speed up to clear the gap and only brake for the next two small slopes. Release the brake for the slope just before the left-hand bend and you'll have enough speed for the following jump. Hit the next lever to stop the cart and jump out. Collect the Savegame Crystal and enter the passage. Carefully avoid the drills and head round to the left. Save your game here. Make sure you have full energy then slide down the slope backwards and grab the edge, let go and drop to the ledge below (you will lose some energy). Stand with your back to the edge and go to the far right, hop backwards and grab the edge. Drop down and go to the far end of the ledge, drop onto the sloping section so that you slide backwards. Grab the edge and drop to the small ledge below. Grab hold of the crack to the left and shimmy as far as you can go to the left. Drop and grab the crack further down then shimmy back to the right and drop down. Jump up and grab the crack to the left and shimmy across to the left. Climb into the gap and kill the legless mutant. In the next area you'll find a short section of walkway above a pool, plus a chap burning some more mutants. Climb onto the walkway and pick up the Crowbar. To get out of here you have to jump across the icy platforms around the room. Start from the one nearest the passage where you entered the area and jump around in a clockwise direction. Save your game here.

Climb up the wall and onto the ledge up above, make your way up the slope dodging the drills. Keep clear of the mining machine around the corner and climb the wall. Run under the two mining machines and continue to make your way through the passages. Eventually you'll drop onto the mine cart track just along from the cart. Go back to the cart and get in.

Step on the brakes until just over halfway down the first long slope then hit the lever after the right-hand bend. Duck to avoid the beams as you go back up again after the jump. Break once you pass under the third beam to make it around the next bend.

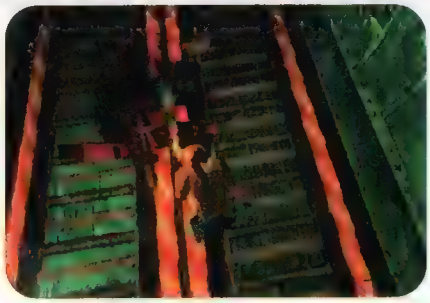
Climb out of the cart and head for the door in the corner, use the Crowbar to break the plank and open the door. Pick up the Lead Acid Battery and head up to the top for the third and final mine cart ride.

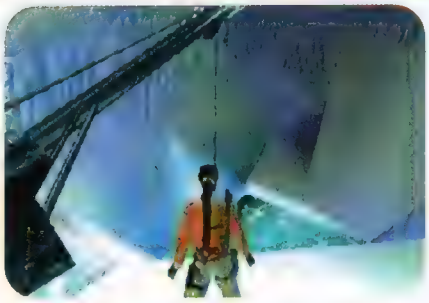
MINE CART RIDE #3

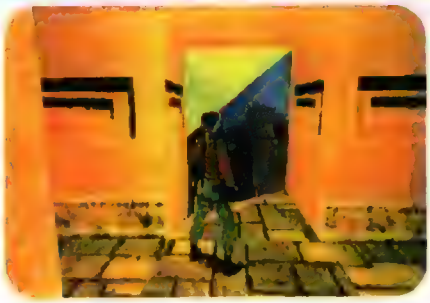
After the first downhill section you have a long climb with numerous beams and drills to avoid, keep your head down. You'll come to a halt in an area with a crane and a diving bell. Use the Lead Acid Battery and the Winch Starter on the crane to lower the diving bell. Dive into the water and swim down to enter the bell from underneath. Collect the Large Medi Pack then dive back in. Swim down and through the passage at the bottom, climb out halfway along to recover. Pick up the Savegame Crystal along the way but don't save your game yet. When you reach the next area, cross the bridge and press the button next to the door on the other side. Go through the door to enter the Lost City of Tinnos.

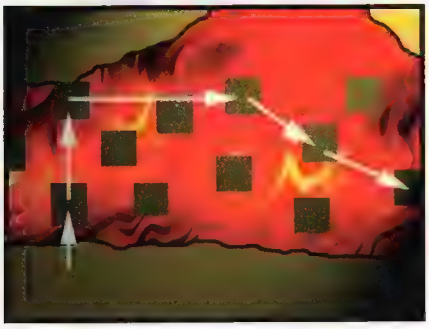
LOST CITY OF TINNOS

Go through the door in front of you to enter the city, head for the far left corner and climb up the wall. Go through the passage at the top and pull the lever. Go back to the main room and enter the opening to the









right of the wall you've just climbed. Pick up the Uli Key from the alcove on the right and go back out. Use the key in the lock at the far end of the room and go through the gate that opens. Climb the wall to reach the area above. Take the first left when you enter the corridor and step out onto the ledge. Go to the end, pull the lever then go back. Slide down the slope on the opposite side of the corridor and head for the far side of the room. Pull the lever to make a ladder appear. Go through the large door back into the main room and go through the doorway in the far left-hand corner of the room.

THE FIVE BUTTONS

Climb the ladder and you'll be faced with five buttons. You have to press the correct buttons to make the gate below open. The rule is derived from hunting, in other words the animal depicted on either side of the button eats whatever is below it. You have to press the buttons which relate to the 'true' depictions, these are:

OX AND LEAF
BIRD AND FISH
BIRD AND LEAF

Go back down to the bottom of the room and enter the open gate. This takes you into a large cavern with a raised stone road. The exit is at the far end of the cavern but the route is blocked by a large gap. Go as far as you can towards the end and you'll see a Savegame Crystal to the left, (watch out for the wasps appearing from the hole up above). Run-jump over to the ledge and collect the Savegame Crystal. Jump onto the flat section above the slope at the edge of the ledge, from here you can reach the platform above. Save your game and then run-jump to the top of the archway directly in front of the ledge. You can now drop down onto the road below and go through the opening in the rock.

Head towards the steps and two large mutants will appear. These guys throw blue fireballs at you from a distance and then rush at you. Stay back and keep jumping to avoid the fireballs, use either the Desert Eagle or the MP5 to dispose of them. Head up the steps and carefully avoid the two swinging fire baskets. Turn right in the next room and head up the steps. You'll find a room with a column of light in the centre, on each side of this room is a themed area. In each area you must collect a mask, and you can complete these areas in any order you like. After each area you return to the lower half of this room, a set of steps either side provides access to the top section.

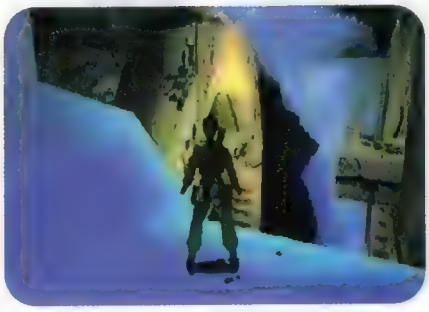
FIRE

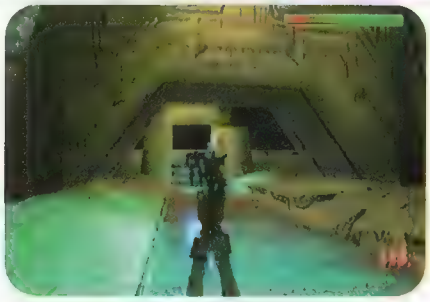
The first room in this area consists of a lava pit and a number of platforms. Use our map to see which platforms to jump onto to reach the far side of the room. Note: you have to be quick for the last jump.

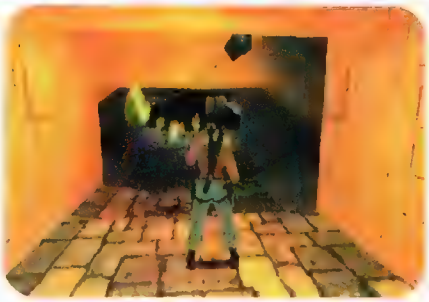
Drop through the trapdoor and you'll slide down to another room. Here you have to jump across invisible ledges avoiding flames thrown by moving statues. Line up with the first ledge and run-jump when the flames stop, quickly hop backwards and grab the edge of the ledge to avoid the next round of flames. When clear again climb up and run-jump and grab the third ledge. When clear, climb up and roll then hop backwards and grab the edge. Wait for the flames and then climb up and do a back-flip with a roll in mid air. Grab the edge by the gate and climb up when clear. Hop backwards when the gate opens and wait for the flames to stop before climbing up and entering the gate. Avoid the fire basket and collect the Oceanic Mask. Go through the door and enter the gate on the left to get back to the column of light.

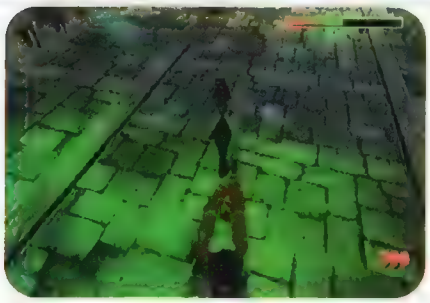
EARTH

At the end of the initial passage you enter quicksand, go straight ahead and follow the route around. Climb out to the right just a little way along from the symbol on the wall. Climb up here and follow the path to the end to find the Oceanic Mask. When you pick up the mask the place start to shake, turn around and head back. When you cross the bridges watch out for the rocks falling from the ceiling. At the split take the left-hand route and kill the wasp if you haven't already. Jump across the lava and continue down to the bottom. Run-jump across the long drop and grab the ledge on the other side. Use a standing jump to reach the ledge around to the right and then run-jump to the opening in front of you. Jump onto the ladder to the right, climb down to the bottom and make your way along the passage. Pull the lever after the second fire basket and climb the ladder.









When the trapdoor closes go through the gate back to the main room.

WATER

You have to reach the water below without getting caught by the blades, the easiest method is to hop off backwards and grab the edge then drop down when safe to do so. Carefully swim between the second set of blades and down into the passage below. When you reach the next set of blades head through the left-hand hole to get some air and to pull the lever. Quickly swim out and go through the right-hand hole then all the way up to the air pocket above. Dive down and head through the passage past the water symbol, pull the lever at the end and return. Get some air then dive down and through the passage at the other end and up to the surface. Get out and pick up the Oceanic Mask and the Savegame Crystal. Save your game, pull the lever and re-enter the water. Swim to the last underwater lever and swim through the passage on the right of the crack. At the bottom go right and into the top or left-hand hole for air again. Go back out and swim through the bottom hole and the current will take you. Go to the far end and dive down through the gap to the left. Pull the next lever and you'll drop through the trapdoor, go through the gate to return to the main room.

WIND

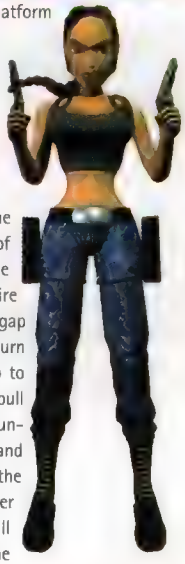
You have to navigate through a maze of tunnels to reach the mask here, if you don't know which way to go this is a nightmare. Go right as you enter the maze and straight ahead at the first and second branch. Go right then immediately left and go to the end of the long straight section of tunnel. Go around the corner and turn right which leads to the bottom of a slope. Climb onto the step to the left at the top of the slope. Take a few steps up the slope and a spiked barrel will roll down, quickly jump to the other side to avoid it and then jump back as the other barrel rolls down. Go up further and do the same thing with the other two barrels. Go to the top and pick up the Oceanic Mask then enter the door. Drop into the water, swim through the passage and climb out. Go through the gate on the right to return to the main area.

THE FOUR MASKS

Once you have all of the oceanic masks place them in the holders surrounding the column of light. Head back up to the top of the room and go back down the steps to the right of the 'Earth' doorway. Go through to the passage on the far side of the room and pull the lever. Go through the gate and it'll close behind you.

MUTANT ROOM

Three large, fireball lobbing mutants will appear, one after the other, from the three other gates. Go into the area behind where the third mutant came from and pull the lever. Go back to the large room and vault onto the grey block. Jump to the platform above and head to the right. Jump the gap above the gate and crawl through the gap further along.

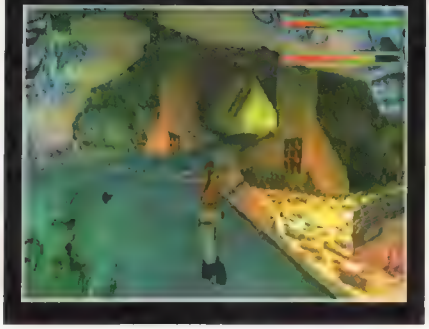


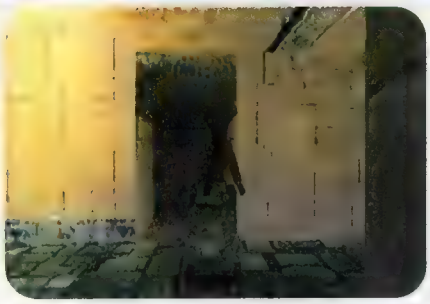
LEDGES AND BUTTONS

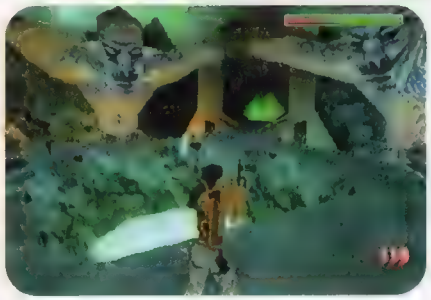
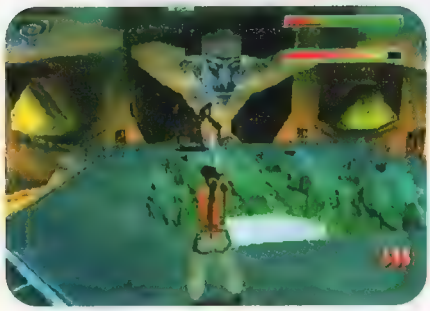
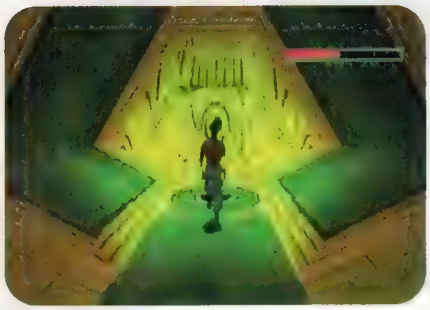
Use a run-jump to reach the ledge on the opposite side of the room, you'll have to time your run to miss the fire basket. Crawl through the gap and pull the lever then return through the gap. Run-jump to the ledge on your left and pull the lever through the gap. Run-jump back to the last ledge and drop down to the ledge in the corner. Run-jump to the other small ledge along the wall from here then jump into the

LARA CATCHES UP

Finally Lara catches up with the doctor but only in time to see him using the artefacts to mutate himself. He falls into a pool and emerges as a giant spider! Time to fight!





corner in front of you. You will have a few wasps to fend off from here on in. Drop down to the ground and pull the lever just around the corner. Climb back up until you reach the first of the two grey ledges. From here jump to the ledge above the last lever you pulled and pull the lever on the wall. Climb all the way back to the top and crawl through the gap to the very first lever you pulled. Pull it and return to the main room. Drop down to the right and jump to the nearby grey ledge a little way along the wall. Stand in the middle of the ledge and do a standing jump to the grey ledge further along the wall. Monkey swing across the room and pull the lever in the alcove. Turn around and jump to the ledge to the left then climb onto the bridge. Vault onto the block to the right and pull the lever at the end of the passage. Jump from the block to the nearby ledge, now make your way back down to the bottom of the room and go through the open door.

Go around to the right and go right again, here you'll find the Uli Key. Now go to the far left-hand corner of the main room and climb the ladder. Drop onto the ledge to the left and pull the lever. Use the Uli Key in the lock and go through the gate. Drop down the hole where the light column was and slide down the slope.

METEORITE CAVERN

Despite Dr Willard's new form (see boxout) he doesn't pose too much of a threat. The cavern has a circular path with four branches leading away from the centre, keep running around the circular path to keep away from the doctor then stop and shoot him from the opposite side of the central pool. By far the best weapon to use is the Desert Eagle as this has lots of power and can be fired quickly.

Basically you have to pick up the artefacts positioned around the edge of the cavern and then kill the doctor. To safely pick up each artefact you first have to shoot the doctor until he falls, with the Desert Eagle this will take exactly ten hits. When he goes down quickly run down one of the paths and pick up an artefact. You have to be quick as the doc will recover pretty quickly. Keep doing this until you have all four artefacts, then shoot him a few more times to finish him off for good. If you have a Savegame Crystal then save your game.

GOING HOME

Above the cavern is the ledge where you entered before the fight, run-jump and grab the wall below the ledge and climb to the top. Back-flip from the face to land on the arm behind you, from here run-jump to the ledge. Enter the passage and go to the left and onto the end. When you get back to the cavern, monkey swing to the ledge on the left. Run-jump to the next ledge and climb up. Run-jump to the final ledge and climb out of the cavern. Run past the red light and down into the tunnel, slide to the bottom. Shoot any guys you meet here and go straight ahead, press the button on the wall to the left and then go between the two buildings. This will take you around to a helicopter, when it lands go through the gate and witness the end sequence.

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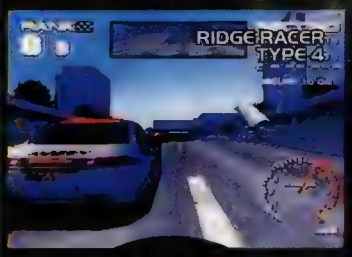

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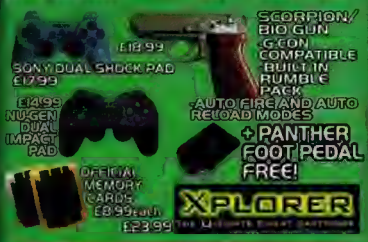
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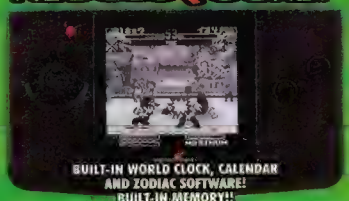

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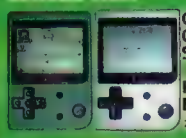

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PUZZLE BOBBLE 3DX	25.00		
PUZZLE FIGHTER 2 TURBO		18.00	22.00
R TYPES	22.00	20.00	
RAGE RACER	10.00	15.00	15.00
RAIDEN DX	30.00		
RAIDEN PROJECT	15.00	25.00	20.00
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RAPID RELOAD		15.00	
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RAY TRACERS	15.00	15.00	
RAYMAN		15.00	10.00
RAYSTORM	25.00	20.00	
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RECIPROHEAT 5000	18.00		

SOFTWARE-2ND HAND cont.

	JAP	UK	US
RELOADED		10.00	15.00
RESIDENT EVIL		15.00	15.00
RESIDENT EVIL DIRECTORS CUT		22.00	20.00
RESIDENT EVIL 2		25.00	15.00
REVOLUTION X		12.00	10.00
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ROAD RAT			
ROAD RIOT			
ROBOTRON X			
ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS			
ROSCO MCQUEEN			
RUSH HOUR			22.00
SAGA FRONTIER	28.00		32.00
SAMPRAS EXTREME TENNIS		20.00	
SAMURAI SHOWDOWN 3	25.00	25.00	
SANGOKU MUSOU	32.00		
SANKYO FEVER	15.00		
SENTIENT		15.00	
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SHELLSHOCK	12.00	12.00	
SHOCKWAVE ASSAULT		10.00	
SIM CITY 2000		22.00	20.00
SIMPLTON WARIOWARE			
SKULL MONKEYS			
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SLAM N JAM 96		10.00	10.00
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SOUL EDGE	20.00		
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SPACE HULK		18.00	
SPACE JAM		12.00	10.00
SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD		15.00	15.00
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STARFIGHTER 3000		5.00	
STARWINDER		10.00	
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STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION	30.00		30.00
STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS ALPHA	22.00	20.00	22.00
STREET FIGHTER ZERO 2	15.00		
STREET RACER	15.00	18.00	18.00
STRIKEPOINT		12.00	20.00
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TAIL OF SUN			35.00
TEKKEN	5.00	8.00	12.00
TEKKEN 2	20.00	15.00	20.00
TEKKEN 3	30.00	28.00	32.00
TEMPEST X3		15.00	
TEN PIN ALLEY		22.00	
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TENNIS ARENA		15.00	
TEST DRIVE - OFF ROAD		12.00	12.00
TEST DRIVE 4		15.00	12.00
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THE LAST REPORT		25.00	
THE NOTE		20.00	
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THREE LIONS		18.00	
THUNDERSTRIKE			8.00
TIGERSHARK		12.00	12.00
TILT		22.00	

SOFTWARE-2ND HAND cont.

	JAP	UK	US
TEKKEN 2	20.00	15.00	20.00
TEKKEN 3	30.00	28.00	32.00
TEMPEST X3		15.00	
TEN PIN ALLEY		22.00	
TENNIS		15.00	
TENNIS ARENA		15.00	
TEST DRIVE - OFF ROAD		12.00	12.00
TETRIS		15.00	
THE LAST REPORT		15.00	
THEME PARK		15.00	
THREE LIONS		15.00	
THUNDERSTRIKE		15.00	
TIGERSHARK		15.00	
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TOMB RAIDER II		18.00	18.00
TOMBI		12.00	
TOMMI MAKKINEN RALLY		20.00	
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V 2000		20.00	
V TENNIS		8.00	
V-RALLY			
VADIMS	18.00		
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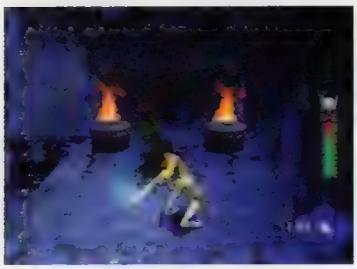
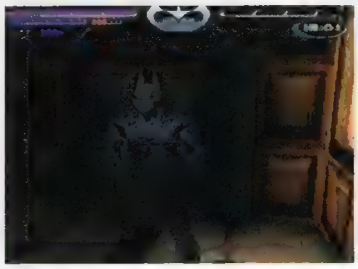
Awfully Big A

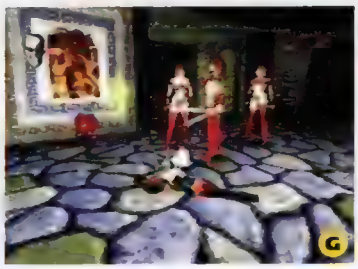
This month we turn our beady eyes upon that largest of games but smallest of genres, the 3D Arcade Adventure. First off, though, we have to define it...



Akuji the Heartless



Batman and Robin



Deathtrap Dungeon

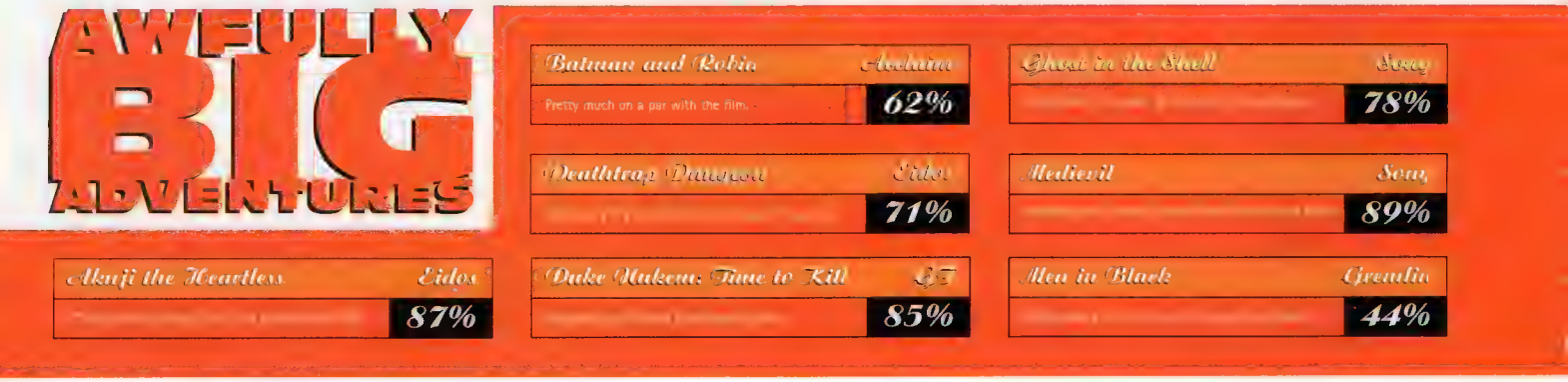
Duke Nukem: TTK

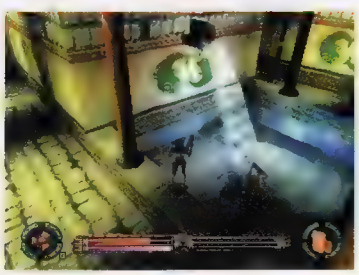
While racing games and beat 'em-ups are ten a penny on the PSX it may come as a bit of a surprise that the 3D Arcade Adventure is a fairly under-nourished genre in terms of sheer numbers, a fact which has nothing to do with its popularity (just look at the *Tomb Raider* trilogy for proof). However, we were further shocked when putting this round-up together to discover that there really aren't that many quality titles in this particular videogaming type, which leaves the question begging: are developers not trying hard enough, or are they just too inept to repeat Lara's high production values and ensuing success?

Our Definition Of...

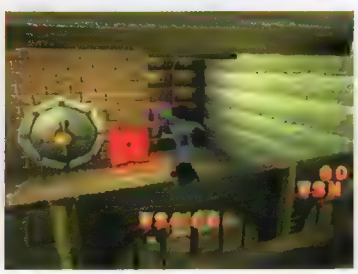
Being perhaps the most strongly three-dimensional of game styles means an Action/Adventure in this mould must have a reliable graphics engine that isn't scarred by the kind of dodgy polygon sorting or perspective problems which lead to your character unwittingly being hurled into a yawning abyss, or overlooking vital objects. How intelligently the camera behaves is also vital, as getting it 'stuck' behind an object can make the more fiddly manoeuvres damn near impossible to execute. A complex control system is now pretty much mandatory, as straightforward running and jumping just isn't enough for Joe Public anymore – he's been weaned on the acrobatics of Lara. Of course, all this is nothing without well-thought out and logically challenging puzzles that tax the mind as well as your dexterity, and go beyond the simple 'pull a lever/open the door' variety. You may question our exclusions from the list, but we just didn't feel *Resident Evil* was the same kind of game as *Tomb Raider*, and perhaps have your own definition of what fits this particular bill.

Verily, this is without doubt one of the hardest genres to get right, as the decidedly patchy list below will attest to...



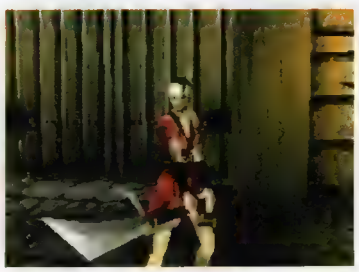


O.D.T



Rascal

Spawn the Eternal



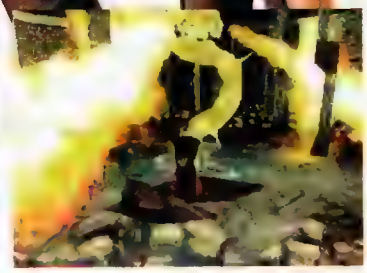
Tenchu: Stealth Assasins

dventures

Ghost in the Shell

Medievil

Men in Black



Nightmare Creatures

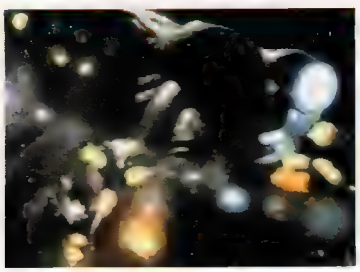
Adventure Is My Middle Name

It virtually goes without saying that this genre is utterly dominated by a certain Ms Croft, and for good reason too. The first *Tomb Raider* was a revolutionary game form when it arrived three short years ago, and more or less set the template for every 3D Arcade Adventure that followed, with its combination of fiendish conundra, convincing scenery and one of the most versatile player characters ever seen. However there have been a number of games in a similar mould that are worthy of seeking out. Recently *Medievil* and *Akuji the Heartless* have taken a more fantasy-styled slant on things – each possesses alluring phantasmogorical graphics and add a dash of the macabre to proceedings – while *Tenchu: Stealth Assassins* brings sneaking about and bloody hand-to-hand combat to the basic exploration elements. Apart from these the cupboard is a touch bare to be honest (and no, we're not counting *Metal Gear Solid*. It's in a class of its own).

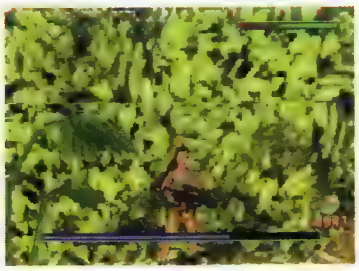
Future Games

Upcoming Action/Adventure gems that'll hopefully rock da party in '99 include Eidos' *Saboteur*, another stealthy game that sees your infiltrating chap aided and abetted by a bloody great dog who can be sicced onto any bad guys, while *Shadowman* comes from Acclaim (creators of *Turok*) and promises to be a rather gory tale based around a gun-wielding maniac. Then of course we have *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* to get our very sharp teeth into (see page 28 for further details) and the oddly-monikered *Syphon Filter* from Sony, which will be along the lines of *Metal Gear Solid* but more James Bond-y, if you catch my drift. Eventually, we may also see the constantly delayed cherub sim *Messiah*, if Shiny iron out the wrinkles, along with the truly terrifying *Silent Hill*, which is so scary that we quite honestly don't want to play it when it arrives. By the looks of things it may be a vintage year for the genre, and by heck it needs one...

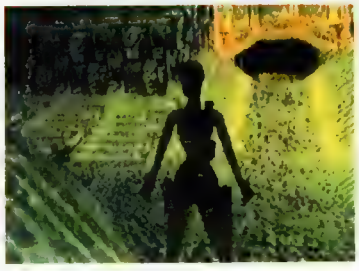
Nightmares Creatures	Sony	Spawn the Eternal	Sony	Tomb Raider	Eidos
	63%		51%		95%
O.D.T	Psygnosis	Tenchu	Activision	Tomb Raider II	Eidos
	80%		87%		94%
Rascal	Psygnosis	The Fifth Element	Sony	Tomb Raider III	Eidos
	47%		55%		93%



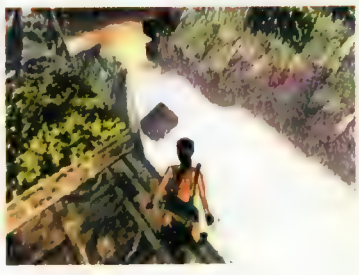
The Fifth Element



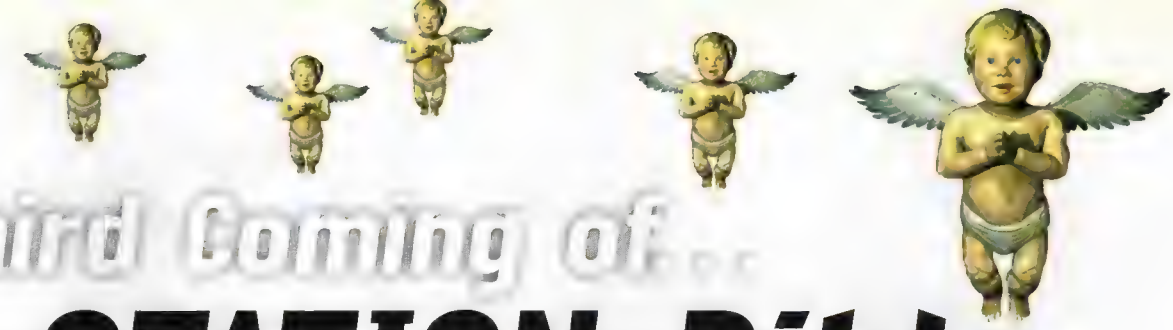
Tomb Raider



Tomb Raider II



Tomb Raider III



The Third Coming of...

The STATION Bible

Left staring at the ever-swelling sea of bewilderment that is your local game emporium's PlayStation selection? Well, here's the consumer equivalent of a tide chart, a complete A-Z of what's available, with helpful pointers for a good buy rather than a wasteful good bye (to hard earned cash, that is).

Updated every two month's by Britain's best selling independent review team, follow our advice to purchasing the gaming gold bricks, and keeping suitably clear of the shitty sticks.

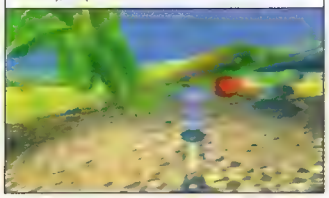
This is the STATION Bible, hallowed be its games.

* DENOTES NEW ENTRY

DENOTES PLATIMUN TITLE (£19.99)

A BUG'S LIFE *
SONY • 3D PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER

Too easy, maybe one for the kids.



ACE COMBAT 2
SONY • FLIGHT SIM • 1 PLAYER

Limited but entertaining arcade flight sim.

ACTUA GOLF
GREMLIN • SPORTS SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

A well conceived and playable golfing sim.

ACTUA GOLF 2
GREMLIN • SPORTS SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

Excellent update, one of the best genre titles available.

ACTUA GOLF 3
GREMLIN • SPORTS SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS

Solid golf simulation, not bad.

ACTUA ICE HOCKEY
GREMLIN • HOCKEY SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

Average hockey sim, swamped by its competition.

[redacted]
GREMLIN • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

One time market leader, now just plain average.

ACTUA SOCCER 2
GREMLIN • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

Not the vast improvement we anticipated.

ACTUA SOCCER 3
GREMLIN • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

Another instalment in the calssic Actua series.

[redacted]
PSYGNOSIS • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

Poor football romp, with dubious special moves.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER '97
PSYGNOSIS • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

It's the same game with new teams and nothing else.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER '98
PSYGNOSIS • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

A reasonable step in the right direction.

AGENT ARMSTRONG
VIRGIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Blend of platformer and shoot 'em-up, short lived.

AGILE WARRIOR
VIRGIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Very, very dodgy flight sim. Avoid.

[redacted]
NAMCO • FLIGHT SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS

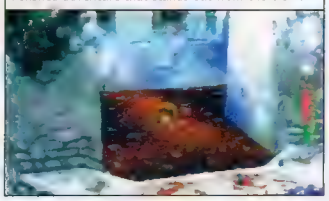
Perfect conversion of the dull arcade game.

AIR RACE
THQ • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS

Poor attempt at blending flying and racing.

AKUJI THE HEARTLESS *
EIDOS • 3D ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER

Polished adventure that stands out from the crowd.



ALLIED GENERAL
MINDSCAPE • WAR • 1 PLAYER

Don't bother. Get *C&C: Retaliation*.

[redacted]
ACCLAIM • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Average first-person blaster, wastes its potential.

ALL STAR SOCCER
EIDOS • PANTS • 1-2 PLAYERS

The poorest football game ever. Probably.

ALL STAR TENNIS '99 *
UBI SOFT • TENNIS SIM• 1-4 PLAYERS

Rather pleasing bout of ball bashing.

ALONE IN THE DARK
INFOGRAMES • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER

Classic adventure, now woefully out of date.

ALUNDRA
PSYGNOSIS • RPG • 1 PLAYER

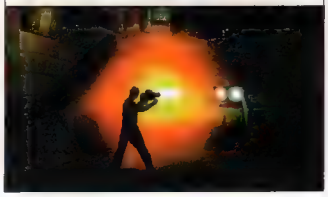
Old style RPG that constantly delights.

ANDRETTI RACING
EA • RACING • 1-2 PLAYERS

Fun two player mode but not a lot besides.

APOCALYPSE *
ACTIVISION • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Good but won't tax the fingers of your average gamer.



AQUANAUT'S HOLIDAY
SONY • SEA ANTICS • 1 PLAYER

Ground breaking sub-aquatic adventure.

ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS
GT • RETRO COMP. • 1-2 PLAYERS

So-so nostalgia trip.

AREA 51
GT • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Linear light gun blaster, lacking in variety.

ARK OF TIME
TAKE 2 • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER

Poor point and click adventure – avoid.

ARMOURED CORE
SONY • SHOOT 'EM UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Average *Mech Warrior* style romp.

ASSAULT
TELSTAR • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

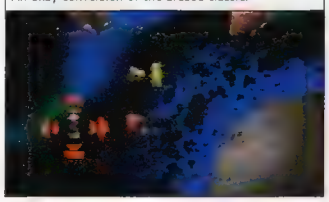
Contra in 2.5D, limited lifespan but fun while it lasts.

ASSAULT RIGS
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Atari's classic *Battle Zone* with next generation visuals.

ASTEROIDS *
ACTIVISION• SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1–2 PLAYERS

An okay conversion of the arcade classic.



ATARI CLASSICS
GT • RETRO • 1 PLAYER

More flashbacks of low quality gaming.

AUTO DESTRUCT
EA • RACER • 1 PLAYER

Rather nice blend of driving and combat.

AYRTON SENNA'S KART DUEL
EA • RACER • 1 PLAYER

Brave track designs make this interesting for a while.

AYRTON SENNA KART DUAL 2
OCEAN • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS

Dire, an insult to the legend.

AZURE DREAMS
KONAMI • RPG • 1 PLAYER

16bit disappointment, *Final Fantasy VII* this ain't.

B-MOVIE
GT • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Average blaster enlivened by great visuals and sound.

BABY UNIVERSE
SONY • DAY TRIPPER • 1 PLAYER

Way over-priced for what this is.

BATMAN FOREVER
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
...and you thought the movie was bad.

BATMAN AND ROBIN
ACCLAIM • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Not a bad use of the licence, but still a bit poor.

BALL BLAZER CHAMPIONSHIP
VIRGIN • FUTURE SPORT • 1-2 PLAYERS
Uninspiring update of the C64 hit.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Poor beat 'em-up, overshadowed by *Tekken*.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Fails to address the original's flaws.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 3
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
An improvement but still not worthy of recommendation.

BATTLE STATIONS
EA • STRATEGY • 1-2 PLAYERS
Battleships using a pen and paper is more fun, and cheaper

BEDLAM
ACCLAIM • STRATEGY/ACTION • 1 PLAYER
Tries to be Syndicate but falls on it's arse.

BIO FREAKS
GT • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Enjoyable blood soaked combat, far better than *MK4*.

BLACK DAWN
EA • HELICOPTER SIM • 1 PLAYER
Helicopter action which delivers for a while.

BLAM! MACHINE HEAD
CORE • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Addictive puzzler, endless in two player.

BLAST CHAMBER
ACTIVISION • PUZZLER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Fun four player puzzle blasting.

BLAST RADIUS
PYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Arcade blast in the *Colony Wars* mode.

BLASTO
SONY • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
Painfully slow blend of jumping and blasting.

BLAZING DRAGONS
BMG • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Point 'n' click and not a lot else.

BLOODSPORT *
SONY• FUTURE SPORT • 1–4 PLAYERS
An updated playground game but without the fun.

BLOODY ROAR
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Animal morphing fighter. Cool.

BRAHMA FORCE
JVC • 3D PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Tedious *Doom*-a-like.

BREAK POINT TENNIS
OCEAN • TENNIS SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Not as good as *Smash Court*.

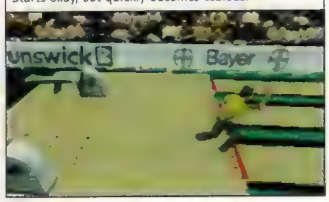
BREATH OF FIRE III
OCEAN • RPG • 1 PLAYER
Doesn't break with tradition and is all the better for it.

BRIAN LARA CRICKET *
CODEMASTERS • CRICKET SIM • 1–4 PLAYERS
Even haters of the sport will enjoy this title.

BROKEN SWORD
SONY • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
One of the best point 'n' clickers available.

BROKEN SWORD 2
SONY • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Better than the last.

BRUNSWICK CIRCUIT PRO BOWLING *
THQ • BOWLING SIM• 1–4 PLAYERS
Starts okay, but quickly becomes tedious.



BUBBLE BOBBLE/RAINBOW ISLAND
SONY • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
Two classic games. A little dated now though.

BUBBLE BOBBLE 2
VIRGIN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
More bubble based action. Or is that bobble?

BURNING ROAD
SUNSOFT • RACER • 1 PLAYER
Tried to be Daytona. Failed miserably.

BUBSY 3D
TELSTAR • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Watch some paint dry instead.

BUSHIDO BLADE
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
The thinking man's fighter.

BUSHIDO BLADE 2 *
SQUARE • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
An improvement on the original, but acquired taste.

BUST-A-GROOVE
SONY • DANCE SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Original, but sadly short-lived dance 'em-up.

BUST-A-MOVE *
ACCLAIM • PUZZLE • 1-2 PLAYERS
Superb puzzle game to rival *Tetris*.

BUST-A-MOVE 3
ACCLAIM • PUZZLE • 1-2 PLAYERS
Lacking in new ideas, but still enjoyable.

BUST-A-MOVE 4 *
ACCLAIM • PUZZLE • 1–2 PLAYERS
The simplest ideas are the best.

CARDINAL SYN
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Average fighting romp, high on gore.

CARNAGE HEART
SONY • ACTION/STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Massive potential that wasn't fulfilled.

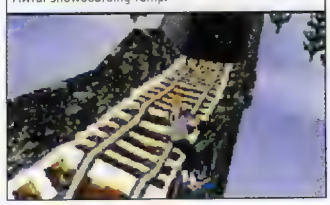
CASPER
SONY • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
For the kids, but would ruin their birthday.

CASTLEVANIA X
KONAMI • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
For fans of the original series only.

CHEESY
OCEAN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Oi, Ocean... No!

CHESSMASTER 3D
MINDSCAPE • CHESS SIM • 1 PLAYER
By a real board for Christ's sake!

CHILL
EIDOS • SNOWBOARD SIM • 1 PLAYER
Awful snowboarding romp.



CHRONICLES OF THE SWORD
PSYGNOSIS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Looks great, plays crap.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS
MINDSCAPE • RACING • 1-4 PLAYERS
Micro Machines clone.

CITY OF THE LOST CHILDREN
PSYGNOSIS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Colourful adaptation of the cult movie. A little obscure.

CLOCK TOWER
ASCII • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Poor attempt at an interactive horror movie.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY
CODEMASTERS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Flawless simulation of the motor sport.

COLONY WARS
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Graphically stunning space based combat.

COLONY WARS: VENGEANCE
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOTER • 1 PLAYER
Graphically lavish encounter of the second kind.

COMMAND & CONQUER
VIRGIN • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Perfect conversion of the PC war game.

C&C: RED ALERT
VIRGIN • STRATEGY • 1-2 PLAYERS
Beats the original hands-down due to the link-up mode.

C&C: RETALIATION
VIRGIN • STRATEGY • 1-2 PLAYERS
Nothing new, but still the best in the series.

CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR
KONAMI • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Nostalgic charm can't save this top down shooter.

COOL BOARDERS
SONY • SNOWBOARD SIM • 1 PLAYER
Enjoyable venture into snowboarding territory.

COOL BOARDERS 2
SONY • SNOWBOARD SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Far more satisfying than the original.

COOL BOARDERS 3
SONY • SNOWBOARDER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Further update taking the series to new heights.

COURIER CRISIS
BMG • RACING/ACTION • 1 PLAYER
Wicked music and cool push-bike gameplay.

CRASH BANDICOOT
SONY • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
3D and 2D scrolling platformer, good fun.

CRASH BANDICOOT 2
SONY • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
More platform adventures of Crash – nothing new.

CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED
SONY • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
The best *Crash Bandicoot* yet!

CRIME KILLER
INTERPLAY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
3D Cops and robbers, quite a blast.

CRITICAL DEPTH
GT • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
SingleTrac's *Twisted Metal* sinks to new depths.

CRITICOM
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Average beat 'em-up, lacking in ideas.

CROC
EA • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Wannabe platform star ends up on the dole.

CROW 2: CITY OF ANGELS
ACCLAIM • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Poor scrolling beat 'em-up – ignore.

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Risible isometric blaster. Forget it.

CRYPT KILLER
KONAMI • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Light gun blaster, redefines the word 'crap'.

CYBERIA
EA • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Out-dated PC port, don't bother.

CYBER SLED
NAMCO • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Awful conversion of an awful arcade game.

CYBERSPEED
MINDSCAPE • RACER • 1 PLAYER
Not worth talking about.

D
ACCLAIM • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Interactive movie, lacking in gameplay.

DARK FORCES
VIRGIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Poor, first person *Star Wars* cash-in.

DARK OMEN
EA • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Only serious strategists need apply.

DARKLIGHT CONFLICT
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Elite-inspired space bound adventure.

DARK STALKERS
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Average fighter.

DAVIS CUP TENNIS
TELSTAR • TENNIS SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Useless tennis simulation

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON
EIDOS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Commendable *Tomb Raider* style adventure.

DEFCON 5
SONY • ACTION/ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Awful space-based *Doom* style game.

DEAD BALL ZONE
GT • FUTURE SPORT • 1-2 PLAYERS
Violent twist of the *Speed Ball* legend. Cool.

DEAD OR ALIVE
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Huge breasts meet average beat 'em-up.

DESCENT
INTERPLAY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Freedom of movement saves this ugly 3D shooter.

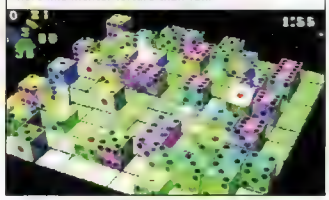
DESCENT 2
INTERPLAY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Same old story, hard to recommend.

DESTRUCTION DERBY
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Original but lacking that certain something.

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1 PLAYER
Enhanced sequel that almost succeeds.

DEVIL'S DECEPTION
SUNSOFT • 3D ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
3D RPG, which fails on all levels.

DEVIL DICE *
SONY • PUZZLER • 1–2 PLAYERS
More like mental torture than fun.



DIABLO
EA • ADVENTURE RPG • 1-2 PLAYERS
PC port of this semi-3D version of *Gauntlet*.

DIE HARD TRILOGY
EA • RACER/SHOOTER • 1 PLAYER
Three cool games for the price of one.

DISCWORLD
PSYGNOSIS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Python-esque point 'n' click adventure.

DISCWORLD 2
PSYGNOSIS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
More of the same bas cally.

DISRUPTOR
INTERPLAY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Nice looking *Doom* clone, not bad at all.

DODGEM ARENA *
BLACK FRIAR • FUTURE SPORT • 1–4 PLAYERS
Massive gameplay rush but too quick a comedown.

DOOM
GT • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
The original first-person blaster. Time takes its toll.

DRAGONHEART
ACCLAIM • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Take a red hot poker and...

DUKE NUKEM
GT • ACTION/ADVENTURE • 1-2 PLAYERS
Classic *Doom* style game with an attitude.

DUKE NUKEM: TIME TO KILL
GT • 3RD PERSON ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Slightly disappointing shooter.

DYNASTY WARRIORS
OCEAN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Cool characters. Not quite *Tekken 3* though.

EARTHWORM JIM 2
VIRGIN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Very 16bit but still fun platform action.

EPIDEMIC
SONY • ACTION/ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Doom style poop.

ESPN EXTREME GAMES
SONY • SPORTS/RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Road Rash on skateboards. As bad as it sounds.

EVERYBODY'S GOLF
SONY • GOLF SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Brilliant golf sim that just keeps giving.

EXCALIBUR 2555AD
TELSTAR • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Poor attempt to steal *Tomb Raider*'s fire.

EXHUMED
BMG • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Very tough first person adventure.

EXPLOSIVE RACING
JMI • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Follows *Burning Road*. More cars and that's it.

EXTREME PINBALL
EMPIRE • PINBALL • 1 PLAYER
Yeah, its pinball all right.

FADE TO BLACK
EA • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Once held in high regard, now long in the tooth.

FANTASTIC FOUR
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
There is nothing fantastic about this tired romp.

FELONY 11-79
ASC • RACER • 1 PLAYER
Wrecking racer; minor fare but not bad.

FIFA '96
EA • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Disappointing version of the Mega Drive classic.

FIFA '97
EA • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Slightly improved but not worth a second look.

FIFA '98 *
EA • SOCCER SIM• 1–8 PLAYERS
Not the best, but playable and great fun.

FIFA: RTWC
EA SPORTS • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
At last, a good FIFA tie-in, a must for fans.

FIGHTING FORCE
EIDOS • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-4 PLAYERS
Shallow, scrolling beat 'em-up, hugely disappointing.

FINAL DOOM
GT • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Tougher version of the original code.

FINAL FANTASY VII
SONY • RPG • 1 PLAYER
The premiere PSX RPG, one of the machine's best releases.

FIRESTORM
CORE • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Cool but old helicopter blaster.

FIRO AND KLAWD
BMG • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Boredom inducing action/adventure antics.

FLOATING RUNNER
THQ • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Pathetic 3D platform stuff.

FLUID
SONY • MUSIC MAKER • 1 PLAYER
Just too limited hold the attention.

F1
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Solid reproduction of the fastest sport on the planet.

F1 '97
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
New season, new visuals and improved gameplay.

F1 '98
PSYGNOSIS • RACING • 1-4 PLAYERS
Should have astounded, only dissapointed.

FORMULA KARTS
TELSTAR • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
It's better than Ayrton Senna's anyway.

FORSAKEN
ACCLAIM • SHOOTER • 1-2 PLAYERS
The game *Descent* should have been.

FRANK THOMAS BASEBALL
ACCLAIM • BASEBALL SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
We all love baseball, right?

FROGGER
JMI • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
Help the frog across the road. Now in glorious 3D. Hmm.

FRENZY
SCI • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Shallow free roaming blaster, with a sense of humour.

G-DARIUS
THQ • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Graphically dated, saved by classic gameplay.

GALAXIAN 3
NAMCO • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
Should have stayed in the arcade.

G-POLICE
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Blade Runner in helicopters. Hard to fault.

GEX
BMG • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Outdated 2D platformer. You have been warned.

GEX 3D
BMG • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Re-ignites the fires of the once fallen genre.

GHOST IN THE SHELL
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Fast paced techno spin off of the manga classic.

GRAN TURISMO
SONY • RACING • 1-2 PLAYERS
Close to perfect – racing fans take note.

GOAL STORM
KONAMI • FOOTBALL • 1-2 PLAYERS
How can the makers of *ISS Pro* do this to us?

GRAND THEFT AUTO
BMG • CRIME SIM • 1 PLAYER

Top down crime spree, original and addictive.

GRID RUN
VIRGIN • PUZZLE/ACTION • 1 PLAYER

Maze game saved by the two player mode.

GUNSHIP 2000
MICROPROSE • COPTER SIM • 1 PLAYER

Tries to be realistic but doesn't quite succeed.

HARDBOILED
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

3D shoot 'em-up of pathetic poorness.

HARDCORE 4X4
GREMLIN • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS

Underdeveloped off-road racer.

HEART OF DARKNESS
OCEAN • PLATFORM/PUZZLER • 1 PLAYER

Imagine *Abe*, and take away all the originality.

HERCULES
SONY • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER

Captures the spirit of its Disney movie origin.

HERC'S ADVENTURES
VIRGIN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER

Old fashioned adventure, for retro fans only.

HEXEN
GT • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Dire port of the original PC code.

HI-OCTANE
EA • RACING • 1 PLAYER

Why convert such poor PC games? It's beyond us.

HYPER TENNIS FINAL MATCH
MICROPROSE • TENNIS SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS

Poor man's Pete Sampras.

IMPACT RACING
JVC • RACER • 1 PLAYER

Cars and guns are cool. But not here.

INCREDIBLE HULK
EIDOS • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER

Foul top down adventure, avoid at all costs.

INDEPENDENCE DAY
EA • FLIGHT SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS

Repetitive flight sim, borrowing little from the movie.

IN THE HUNT
THQ • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Redundent 16bit style shooter.

INDY 500
JVC • RACER • 1 PLAYER

Arcade twist on the popular US motor sport.

IRON AND BLOOD
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Words fail us, expect maybe shite.

IRONMAN XO MANOWAR
ACCLAIM • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

One of the worst PlayStation games ever.

ISS DELUXE
KONAMI • FOOTY SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

Exactly the same as the 16bit versions.

ISS PRO
KONAMI • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

The PlayStation League winner, now available on budget.

ISS PRO '98
KONAMI • FOOTIE SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS

The same as the first, but improved! Must buy!

JEREMY MCRATH SMC
ACCLAIM • RACER • 1 PLAYER

Shoddy motor-cross sim.

JERSEY DEVIL
OCEAN • 3D PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER

Cool character with average gameplay. Worthwhile.

JET RIDER
SONY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS

Flawed racer that tries too hard.

JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE
US GOLD • PLATFORM • 1PLAYER

Do we need another 2D platformer, errr nope!

JONAH LOMU RUGBY
CODEMASTERS • RUGBY SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS

The only PlayStation rugby title. Does the job well.

JUDGE DREDD
GREMLIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Poor light gun game, little to do with Dredd.

JUMPING FLASH
SONY • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER

Intriguing 3D platformer that almost succeeds.

JUMPING FLASH 2
SONY • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER

Improved visuals and gameplay – worth a look.

JUPITER STRIKE
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

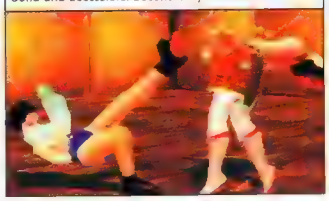
Decidedly dated blaster.

KI ARENA FIGHTERS
T•HQ • KICK BOXING • 1-2 PLAYERS

Beat 'em-up based around kick boxing.

KENSEI: SACRED FIST *
KONAMI • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Solid and accessible. Second only to *Tekken 3*.



KILLING ZONE
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Ooh scary! This slack beat 'em-up is nasty business.

KICK OFF 97
MAXIS • FOOTIE SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS

Forget it. There are far better soccer games around.

KICK OFF WORLD
FUNSOFT • FOOTY • 1-4 PLAYERS

Still doesn't live up to *Actua* and *ISS*.

KILEAK THE BLOOD
SONY • 3D ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER

Pathetic *Doom* style fodder.

KILLING ZONE
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Classic monsters meet shit beat 'em-up.

KINGS FIELD
SONY • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER

1st-person RPG. To be avoided.

KLONOA: DOOR TO PHANOMILE
SONY • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER

Hardly taxing but an enjoyable '2.5D' platformer.

KNOCKOUT KINGS *
EA • BOXING SIM • 1–2 PLAYERS

Stuck between arcade and simulation.

KONAMI OPEN GOLF
KONAMI • GOLF • 1-2 PLAYERS

Arcade style golf. So-so.

KRAZY IVAN
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Great presentation and no gameplay. Average.

KULA WORLD
SONY • PUZZLE • 1 PLAYER

Great puzzler but where's the multiplayer action?

KURUSHI
SONY • PUZZLE • 1 PLAYER

Another fab Sony puzzler, mate.

LEGACY OF KAIN
BMG • RPG • 1 PLAYER

Old school RPG with vampire lead... nice idea.

LEMMINGS
PSYGNOSIS • PUZZLE • 1 PLAYER

Classic puzzler that still enthralls today.

LETHAL ENFORCERS
KONAMI • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Great conversion of the dire arcade games.

LIBERO GRANDE
SONY • FOOTIE SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS

Intriguing new twist on the tired football tradition.

LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE
EA • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER

The charming PC title, perfectly ported.

LITTLE
GREMLIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Maze based shoot 'em-up. Lacks variety

LOST VIKINGS 2
INTERPLAY • PLATFORM • 1-2 PLAYERS

Mix of platformer and puzzle solving adventure.

LOMAX
PSYGNOSIS • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER

Lemmings inspired 2D platform. Why?

LONE SOLDIER
TELSTAR • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

No, not very good at all actually.

LUCKY LUKE
OCEAN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER

Great visuals but lacks originality.

MACHINE HUNTER
EIDOS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

A dodgy blaster that should be avoided by everyone

MADDEN '97
EA SPORTS • AMERICAN FOOTY • 1-4 PLAYERS

Yawn-inducing NFL football sim.

MADDEN '98
EA SPORTS • AMERICAN FOOTY • 1-8 PLAYERS

Further instalment of American football sim.

MADDEN '99
EA SPORTS • AMERICAN FOOTY • 1-8 PLAYERS

Fans of the sport will appreciate this.

MAGIC CARPET
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Carpet riding 3D adventure, frankly a little odd.

MARVEL SUPER HEROES
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS

Classic *SF2* gameplay with Marvel comic heroes.

MAXIMUM FORCE
GT • LIGHTGUN • 1 PLAYER

Stick to *Time Crisis* or *Point Blank*.

MAX POWER RACING *
INFOGRAMES• RACING • 1–2 PLAYERS

Nice alternative to *Gran Turismo*.

MDK
INTERPLAY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

Technically stunning 3D shoot 'em-up.

MECHWARRIOR
ACTIVISION • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER

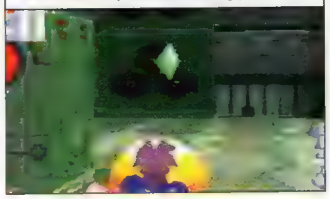
Robots trudging around barren backgrounds.

MEDIEVIL
SONY • PLATFORM ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER

A delight from start to finish.

MEGAMAN LEGENDS *
VIRGIN • RPG • 1 PLAYER

His new role nearly succeeds. Amazingly!

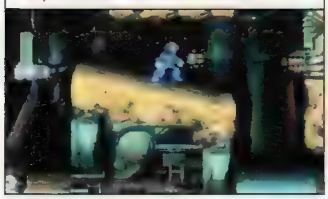


MEGAMAN 8
OCEAN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
16bit platform action to be left on the shelf.

MEGAMAN BATTLE AND CHASE
OCEAN • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Tries to be *Mario Kart* and fails.

MEGAMAN X3
OCEAN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Same old story, see above for details.

MEGAMAN X4 *
VIRGIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP• 1 PLAYER
A very tired series that shouldn't continue.



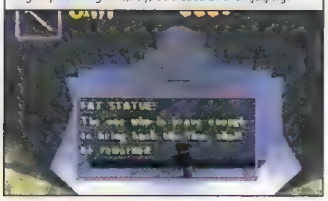
MEN IN BLACK
GREMLIN • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Laborious *Res Evil* inspired adventure.

MICHAEL OWEN'S WLS '97 *
EIDOS • FOOTBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Focused on the sport, not the hype.

MICKEY'S WILD ADVENTURE
SONY • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
More 16bit platforming. Why bother?

MICRO MACHINES V3
CODEMASTERS • RACER • 1-8 PLAYERS
Fast-paced, madcap, 3D multiplayer racer.

MONKEY HERO *
TAKE 2 • RPG • 1 PLAYER
Slightly dated gameplay, but cute and engaging.



MONOPOLY
HASBRO • BOARDGAME • 1-4 PLAYER
A lot more expensive than the infinitely better boardgame.

MONSTER TRUCKS
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1 PLAYER
Successful blend of off-roading and track racing.

MORTAL KOMBAT 3
GT • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
You might as well just stick with *Trilogy*.

MORTAL KOMBAT 4
GT • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
An improvement on *3* but still slagging behind the rest.

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY
GT • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Good value for die-hard fans.

MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES
GT • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
No.

MOTOR MASH
OCEAN • COMIC RACER • 1-4 PLAYER
Not as good as *Micro Machines V3*.

MOTO RACER
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Cycle racer, incorporating dirt and super bikes.

MOTO RACER 2
EA • RACER• 1-2 PLAYERS
Yet another sub-standard racer!

MOTORHEAD
GREMLIN • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
A furiously fast-paced racer.

MOTORTOON GP
SONY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Cartoony style overhead racer. Okay.

MOTORTOON GP 2
SONY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Whaddyathink?

MR DOMINO
JVC • PUZZLE • 1 PLAYER
Nice idea but very limited.

MUSIC
CODEMASTERS • MUSIC CREATOR• 1 PLAYER
A must-have for all budding dance musicians.

MYST
SONY • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Slow moving but intrigu'ing.

N20
GREMLIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYER
Tempest on acid, great music though.

NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS '98
KONAMI • SPORTS SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Just like the British Olympic team.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOL 1
NAMCO • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
Not bad.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOL 2
NAMCO • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
Worse.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOL 3
NAMCO • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
Even worse.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOL 4
NAMCO • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
I quit.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOL 5
NAMCO • RETRO • 1-2 PLAYERS
Anyone got a rope?

NANOTEK WARRIOR
VIRGIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
You'll be finished with this within the hour.

NASCAR '98
EA • RACING • 1 PLAYER
Improves greatly on the original.

NASCAR RACING
DOMARK • RACING • 1 PLAYER
Buy a 2CV instead.

NBA HANGTIME
GT • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Average B-ball.

NBA: IN THE ZONE
KONAMI • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Looks good, plays average.

NBA: IN THE ZONE 2
KONAMI • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Improves on the original. Still not great though.

NBA JAM EXTREME
ACCLAIM • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Top arcade basketball action.

NBA JAM TE
ACCLAIM • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
More top NBA Jam basketball.

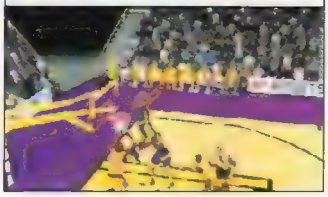
NBA LIVE '96
EA • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Loses out through poor controls.

NBA LIVE '97
EA • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Better than the first game.

NBA LIVE '98
EA • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Basically the same as the other two.

NBA PRO '98
KONAMI • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
One of the better bounce-ball games available.

NBA LIVE 99 *
EA • BASKETBALL SIM • 1–4 PLAYERS
Well polished, stat-heavy, but gameplay empty.



NEED FOR SPEED
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
The cars save a very average racer.

NEED FOR SPEED 2
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Not as good as the original, but it still has those cool cars.

NEED FOR SPEED 3
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Best of the series

NEWMAN-HAAS RACING
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Doesn't quite live up to its F1 predecessor.

NFL EXTREME
SONY • NFL SIM• 1-2 PLAYERS
Sluggish but comprehensive US footie sim.

NFL GAMEDAY
SONY • AMERICAN FOOTIE • 1-2 PLAYERS
If you're a fan, this is okay.

NFL BLITZ
GT • NFL SIM• 1-4 PLAYERS
Midway blend *NBA Jam* with US Football.

NHL '98
EA SPORTS • ICE HOCKEY • 1-8 PLAYERS
Nothing outstanding in this ice hockey sim.

NHL BREAKAWAY '98
ACCLAIM • ICE HOCKEY • 1-8 PLAYERS
3D ice hockey, again nothing special.

NHL FACE OFF '98
SONY • ICE HOCKEY • 1-8 PLAYERS
Playable but it doesn't set the world on fire.

NHL OPEN ICE
GT • ICE HOCKEY • 1-2 PLAYERS
One of the worst ice hockey games.

NHL POWERPLAY '98
VIRGIN • ICE HOCKEY • 1-2 PLAYERS
Worthy puck smasher.

NIGHTMARE CREATURES
SONY • 3D ACTION/ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Deathtrap Dungeon set in C18th London.

NINJA
EIDOS • ACTION/ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Uninspiring dose of the scrolling beat 'em-up.

NOVA STORM
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Dire.

NUCLEAR STRIKE
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
More *Strike*, probably the best in the series.

O.D.T
PSYGNOSIS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Nice but flawed attempt to bring life to the genre.

ODDWORLD: ABE'S EXODDUS
GT • PLATFORM/PUZZLER • 1 PLAYER
Superb graphics but a little too similar to the original.

ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE
GT • PLATFORM/PUZZLER • 1 PLAYER
The best platform/puzzler with a fart option.

OFF-WORLD INTERCEPTOR
BMG • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Why do you think we want to play crap 3D ports?

OLYMPIC GAMES
US GOLD • SPORTS SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
It is hard to sum up the badness of this game.

ONE
ASC GAMES • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Great visuals, pretty much standard gameplay.

ONSIDE SOCCER
TELSTAR • FOOTIE • 1-2 PLAYERS
You know what we're going to say.

OLYMPIC SOCCER
US GOLD • FOOTIE SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Don't bother, there's far better on the market.

OVERBLOOD
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Cool sci-fi adventure.

OVERBOARD
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Quirky original and fun, especially in multiplayer.

PANDEMONIUM
BMG • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Scorned for psuedo 3D, but still a decent platformer.

PANDEMONIUM 2
BMG • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Same gameplay as original, with added psychedelics.

PANZER GENERAL
MINDSCAPE • WAR • 1 PLAYER
Tiresome wargame.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER
SONY • MUSIC • 1 PLAYER
An original as they come rapping game.

PEAK PERFORMANCE
JVC • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Decent racer.

PERFECT ASSASSIN
GROLIER • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Bad, beyond redemption.

PERFECT WEAPON
EA • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
It won't light your fire but it won't put it out either.

PGA TOUR '97
EA • GOLF SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
It's a golf game, innit?

PHILOSOMA
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Average pseudo 3D shooter.

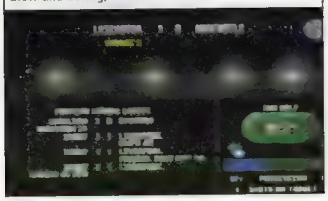
PHAT AIR EXTREME
FUNSOFT • SNOWBOARD SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Better than *Chill*, but that doesn't say a lot.

PITBALL
TIME WARNER • SPORTS SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Future sports. Not as good as *Dead Ball Zone*.

PITFALL 3D
ACTIVISION • 3D PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Lacks magic of original Atari game, but worthy effort.

PLAYER MANAGER
ANCO • STRATEGY • 1-2 PLAYERS
'The pitch was no good...' and other such excuses.

PLAYER MANAGER SEASON 98–99 *
INFOGRAMES • MANAGEMENT • 1-4 PLAYERS
Slow and boring, but full of stats.



POCKET FIGHTERS
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Street Fighter for kids, not as bad as it sounds.

PO'ED
INTERPLAY • DOOM CLONE • 1 PLAYER
Doom clone with a sense of humour.

POINT BLANK
SONY • LIGHT GUNNER • 1-2 PLAYERS
If you own a light gun buy this now.

POOL SHARK
GREMLIN • POOL SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Average pool sim, not good but not bad.

PORSCHE CHALLENGE
SONY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
One car and limited tracks let down a good racer.

POWERBOAT
INTERPLAY • RACING • 1-2 PLAYERS
When will we get a decent water based racer?

POWER MOVE WRESTLING
ACTIVISION • WRESTLING SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Old wrestler. Surpassed by now.

POWER SOURCE
SONY • COMPILATION • 1 PLAYER
Great value charity compilation.

POY POY
KONAMI • ARCADE ACTION • 1-4 PLAYERS
Superb multiplayer hurling fest.

PREMIER MANAGER '98
GREMLIN • MANAGEMENT • 1-4 PLAYERS
Superb stats and numbers game.

PREMIER MANAGER '99 *
GREMLIN • MANAGEMENT • 1-4 PLAYERS
A great management game that provides a lot of fun.

PRIMAL RAGE
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Dinosaurs are cool but not in this game.

PRO PINBALL
EMPIRE • PINBALL • 1-2 PLAYERS
Should be left in the arcades...

PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK
EMPIRE • PINBALL • 1-4 PLAYERS
...and this.

PROJECT OVERKILL
KONAMI • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Boring but pretty shooter.

PROJECT X2
OCEAN • BLASTER • 1 PLAYER
Hectic 2D shoot 'em-up.

PSYBADEK
PSYGNOSIS • PLATFORM/RACER • 1 PLAYER
Very poor fusion of platformer and racer.

PSYCHIC FORCE
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Could have been good, alas it's not.

PSYCHIC DETECTIVE
EA • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Interactive movie adventure. Leave.

RAGE RACER
NAMCO • RACER • 1 PLAYER
Surpassed of late, but still a classic.

RAGING SKIES
WARNER • FLIGHT SIM. • 1 PLAYER
No variation.

RAIDEN
OCEAN • SHOOTER • 1 PLAYER
Looks terrible, plays okay.

RALLY CROSS
SONY • RACER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Never stood a chance with *V-Rally* around at the time.

RAPID RACER
SONY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Misses the mark for a cool water racer.

RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR
GT • SMASH 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Solid but limited update of an old arcade game.

RAPID RELOAD
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
One of the first PSX titles and, boy does it show.

RASCAL
PSYGNOSIS • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
Too easy, limited and boring. Looks fantastic though.

RAYMAN
UBI SOFT • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Praised by many, but we don't know why.

RAY STORM
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Eye candy with a sour gameplay taste.

RAY TRACER
SONY • RACER • 1 PLAYER
It's not deep but it's certainly fun.

REBEL ASSAULT
VIRGIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Why are *Star Wars* licences always so poor?

REBOOT
EA • ACTION/ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Hoverboards add a twist to this decent platformer.

REBEL ASSAULT 2
VIRGIN • 3D SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Star Wars based *Doom* clone.

RELOADED
GREMLIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Almost exactly the same as the original *Loaded*.

RESIDENT EVIL
VIRGIN • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
The original survival horror game. Superb.

RESIDENT EVIL DIRECTOR'S CUT
VIRGIN • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Blatant cash-in – a stop-gap release.

RESIDENT EVIL 2
VIRGIN • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Does it top the original? The jury's still out.

RETURN FIRE
TIME WARNER • ACTION • 1-2 PLAYERS
Excellent two player military action/strategy.

REVOLUTION X
ACCLAIM • LIGHT-GUN BLAST • 1-2 PLAYERS
Endorsed by Aerosmith, say no more.

RISE OF THE ROBOTS 2
MIRAGE • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
The epitome of poor gameplay.

RIDGE RACER
NAMCO • RACER • 1 PLAYER
The perfect arcade experience in your home.

RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION
NAMCO • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
New tracks and cars make this an essential purchase.

RIDGE RACER TYPE 4 *
VIRGIN • RACER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Graphically the best, but let down by handling.

RIOT
PSYGNOSIS • FUTURE SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
One of the first *Speedball 2* clones. It failed.

RIVEN
ACCLAIM • POINT 'N' CLICK • 1 PLAYERS
The follow up to the ever popular *Myst*.

RISK
HASBRO • WAR • 1 PLAYER
More boring wargaming. *CEtC* rules!

RIVAL SCHOOLS *
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-4 PLAYERS
A rewarding scrap.

ROBOTRON X
GTI • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Shoot robots in this classic but flawed arcade game.

ROBO PIT
THQ • BEAT-'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Wasted robot fighting action.

ROAD RASH
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Mega Drive classic falls at the first hurdle.

ROGUE TRIP
GT • AUTOMOTIVE COMBAT• 1-2 PLAYERS
How to describe this *Twisted Metal* wannabe? Shite?

ROSCO MCQUEEN
SONY • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
Very, very repetitive platformer.

R-TYPES
VIRGIN • SHOOT 'EM-UP• 1 PLAYER
Yes, it's a little retro – but it's still great.

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH
GT INTERACTIVE • RACER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Worst racer on the system.

SAMPRAS EXTREME
CODEMASTERS • TENNIS • 1-4 PLAYERS
Decent tennis licence.

SAMURAI SHOWDOWN III
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Why is this only available on rental? Hmm...

S.C.A.R.S
UBI SOFT • RACING/COMBAT • 1-4 PLAYERS
Could do a lot worse than this.

SENSIBLE SOCCER ECE *
GT• SOCCER SIM • 1–4 PLAYERS
Looks unfinished! Inept control system.

SENTIENT
PSYGNOSIS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
The novel ideas don't save this patched together title.

SHADOW MASTER
PSYGNOSIS • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Pretty but boring first-person blaster.

SHELLSHOCK
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Pretty but boring first-person blaster. (sounds familiar – ed)

SIM CITY 2000
MAXIS • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Low grade *Battle Tank* clone.

SKELETON WARRIOR
NIGHTMARE • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Should have stayed in the coffin.

SKULL MONKEYS
EA • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
Claymation is fun for a while but it won't last.

SMALL SOLDIERS
EA • ACTION/ADVENTURE• 1-2 PLAYERS
Poor use of the movie licence.

SMASH COURT TENNIS
NAMCO • TENNIS • 1-4 PLAYERS
The best tennis sim on the PlayStation.

SNOW RACER '98
OCEAN • WINTER SPORTS • 1-2 PLAYERS
This snow-based game doesn't top *Coolboarders 2*.

SOUL BLADE
NAMCO • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
The pretender to the beat 'em-up throne.

SOVIET STRIKE
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Commy scum get choppers up their asses. Cool.

SPACE HULK
EA • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
An attempt to add strategy to a 3D blaster.

SPAWN: THE ETERNAL
SONY • ACTION ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Terrible, sparse platform cum beat 'em-up.

SPEED KING
KONAMI • RACER • 1-2 PLAYER
Unexciting *WipEeout* rip-off.

SPEEDSTER
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Top down racing in a serious fashion.

SPIDER
BMG • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
Pretty, fun and challenging platformer.

SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD
VIRGIN • PLATFORM • 1 PLAYER
Spot loses it in the 32bit world.

SPYRO THE DRAGON
SONY • PLATFORM• 1 PLAYER
A colourful jaunt into the world of platforming.

STAR GLADIATOR
CAPCOM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
There are far better alternatives out there.

STARS WARS: MOTK
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Playable, if only for the *Star Wars* characters.

STARFIGHTER 3000
TELSTAR • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
3D shoot 'em-up, let down by dodgy visuals.

STARWINDER
MINDSCAPE • RACER • 1-2 PLAYER
Pretty but boring futuristic racer.

STEEL REIGN
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Tanks and explosions don't keep people interested.

STEEL HARBINGER
MINDSCAPE • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Like *Loaded*. But worse.

STREAK
GT • RACER• 1-2 PLAYERS
Futuristic blend of snowboarding and racing.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Street Fighter...

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
More *Street Fighter*...

STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Yet more *Street Fighter*..

STREET FIGHTER EX
VIRGIN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
You guessed it... but with a cool polygon twist.

STREET FIGHTER THE MOVIE
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Wees on the ser es' good name.

STREET RACER
UBI SOFT • RACER • 1-8 PLAYERS
Multiplayer racing action that doesn't deliver.

STRIKER '96
TIME WARNER • FOOTY • 1-2 PLAYERS
Too fast and some glaring flaws.

STRIKEPOINT
ELITE • HELICOPTER SIM • 1 PLAYER
Inferior *Strike* style action.

SUPER FOOTBALL CHAMP
MINDSCAPE • FOOTBALL • 1-4 PLAYERS
Are they havin' a laugh?

SUPER PANG
OCEAN • RETRO • 1 PLAYER
Still playable arcade remake.

SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2 TURBO
VIRGIN • PUZZLER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Street Fighter characters on a puzzle game tip.

SUPERSONIC RACERS
MINDSCAPE • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Surpassed by the excellent *Circuit Breakers*.

SWAGMAN
EIDOS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Totally average adventure.

SYNDICATE WARS
EA • ACTION/STRATEGY • 1-4 PLAYERS
Excellent update of Bullfrog's classic game.

TEKKEN
NAMCO • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Tekken...

TEKKEN 2
NAMCO • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
More *Tekken*...

TEKKEN 3
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
The best *Tekken*, buy it.

TEMPEST X3
INTERPLAY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Psychedelic wireframe shoot 'em-up. Cwazy.

TENCHU
ACTIVISION • NINJA SIM • 1 PLAYER
A little short but still a great blood-soaked title..

TENKA
PSYGNOSIS • DOOM CLONE • 1 PLAYER
Inferior *Doom* clone.

TENNIS ARENA
UBI SOFT • TENNIS SIM • 1-2 PLAYER
Competent sports sim.

TEN PIN ALLEY
EA • BOWLIN' SIM • 1 -4 PLAYERS
Surprisingly good fun.

TETRIS PLUS
JVC • PUZZLE • 1-2 PLAYERS
We defy you to put it down.

TETRIS X
JVC • PUZZLE • 1-4 PLAYERS
Now with added four player fun!

TEST DRIVE 4
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Superb with a steering wheel.

TEST DRIVE 4X4
EA • OFF-ROAD RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Extreme racer. Extremely crap that is.

TEST DRIVE 5
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Another update to the long running series, average.

TEST DRIVE OFF ROAD
EA • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Let down by terrible visuals.

THE FIFTH ELEMENT
SONY • ACTION/ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Very poor adaptation of the superb movie.

THE KING OF FIGHTERS
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
More rental fighting. Guess why.

THE LAST REPORT
LDA • POINT'N'CLICK • 1 PLAYER
Uninspired adventure.

THE LOST WORLD
EA • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
Nice looking but poor playing.

THE NOTE
SUNSOFT • RPG • 1 PLAYER
A 3D RPG that falls flat on its face very early on.

THE UNHOLY WAR
EIDOS • ACTION/STRATEGY• 1-2 PLAYERS
The SAS couldn't pull off a better surprise hit.

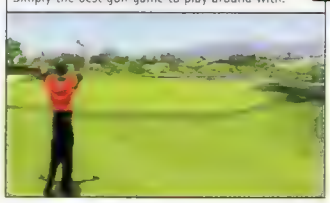
THEME HOSPITAL
EA • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Odd but entertaining.

THEME PARK
EA • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Complex run your own business sim.

THREE LIONS
BMG • FOOTBALL SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Competent but flawed World Cup bandwagon game.

TIGER SHARK
GT • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Basic 3D blaster.

TIGER WOODS '99 PGA TOUR GOLF *
EA • GOLF SIM • 1–4 PLAYERS
Simply the best golf game to play around with.



TILT
EA • PINBALL • 1 PLAYER
Class pinball action.

TIME COMMANDO
EA • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Early attempt at 3D adventure.

T
SONY • LIGHT GUN • 1 PLAYER
Alongside *Point Blank*, the best light gun game.

TOBAL NO 1
SONY • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Good but not as addictive as the *Tekken* series.

T
CODEMASTERS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Only second to *GT*.

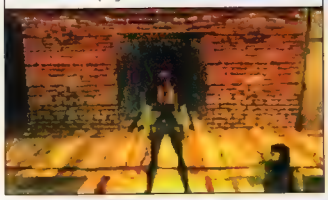
TOCA 2
CODEMASTERS • RACER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Fantastic sequel to the stunning original.

TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE
THQ • RACER • 1 PLAYER
Boring-ish racer.

TOMB RAIDER
EIDOS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
Lara's debut adventure rocked the world...

TOMB RAIDER II
EIDOS • ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
...her sequel however, went ballistic.

TOMB RAIDER III *
EIDOS • 3D ADVENTURE • 1 PLAYER
The most satisfying 3D adventure on the PSX.



TOTAL DRIVIN'
OCEAN • RACER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Competent racer backed up by a great soundtrack.

TOTAL ECLIPSE
BMG • 3D SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Poor, visuals, sound and gameplay.

TOTAL NBA
SONY • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-8 PLAYERS
Class B-ball game.

TOTAL NBA '96
SONY • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
One of the best basketball games around.

TOTAL NBA '97
SONY • BASKETBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Looks better, doesn't play as well as the previous title.

TRACK & FIELD
KONAMI • ATHLETICS • 1-4 PLAYERS
Button bashing mayhem.

TRANSPORT TYCOON
OCEAN • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Not as good as *Sim City* but trying.

TRASH IT
GT • PLATFORM • 1-4 PLAYERS
A big NO to this attempt.

TREASURES OF THE DEEP
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Lush underwater epic.

TUNNEL B1
OCEAN • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Great graphics don't hide the poor gameplay.

TWISTED METAL
SONY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Driving and guns. We like.

TWISTED METAL 2
SONY • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
More driving and more guns. We like more.

ULTIMATE PARODIUS
KONAMI • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Enjoyable volleyball romp.

V2000
GROLIER • 3D SHOOTER• 1 PLAYER
Stick with it to get the most from this title.

V TENNIS
ACCLAIM • SPORTS SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Pretty pathetic attempt.

V-RALLY
OCEAN • RACER • 1-4 PLAYERS
Once the best rally sim, but Colin just drove into town.

VANDAL HEARTS
KONAMI • RPG • 1 PLAYER
RPG and combat mixed together well.

VICTORY BOXING
JVC • BOXING • 1-2 PLAYERS
Cool blend of action and training.

VICTORY BOXING 2
JVC • BOXING • 1-2 PLAYERS
Not as good as the original.

VIRTUAL POOL
INTERPLAY • SPORTS SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
We'd rather play in the pub.

VIRTUAL GOLF
CORE • GOLF SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Looking dated next to *Actua Golf 2*.

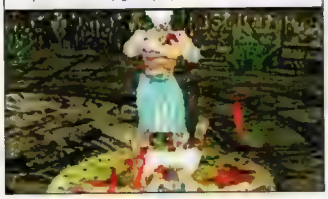
VIVA FOOTBALL *
VIRGIN • FOOTBAL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Fast flowing and skilful football game.

VMX RACING
FUNSOFT • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Never really hits the mark.

VS
THQ • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Cool characters, crud gameplay.

VR BASEBALL
INTERPLAY • BASEBALL SIM • 1-2 PLAYERS
Nice visuals, but baseball is tedious.

WAR GODS
GT • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Fully 3D but sticky gameplay lets it down.



WARCRAFT 2
EA • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Takes *C&C* back to the Middle Ages.

WARHAMMER
MINDSCAPE • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Deep *C&C* style action.

WARHAWK
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Aged winner doesn't stay the distance.

WAYNE GRETSKY'S HOCKEY
GT • ICE HOCKEY • 1-2 PLAYERS
Not as good as *NHL '98* but nice all the same.

WCW NITRO
THQ • WRESTLING • 1-2 PLAYERS
Why are all wrestling games crap?

WCW VS THE WORLD
THQ • WRESTLING • 1-2 PLAYERS
See above. Only a little better.

WILD 9
SHINY • PLATFORMER • 1 PLAYER
Original, violent and highly entertaining.

WILD ARMS
SONY • RPG • 1 PLAYER
Uninspiring effort, lacking in mainstream appeal.

WING COMMANDER 3
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
This fight sim just doesn't have the gameplay.

WING COMMANDER 4
EA • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1 PLAYER
Good story-line but again, boring gameplay.

W
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Impressive but very tough techno racer.

W
PSYGNOSIS • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
With the challenge tuned down, *WipEout* rules.

W
OCEAN • STRATEGY • 1-4 PLAYERS
Strategy, wriggly things, bazookas. Addictive as hell.

WING OVER
JVC • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Decent arcade flight sim.

WORLD CUP '98
EA SPORTS • FOOTBALL SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
The best football game available.

WORLD CUP GOLF
OCEAN • GOLF • 1-2 PLAYERS
Extremely poor golf sim.

WORLD LEAGUE BASKETBALL
MINDSCAPE • SPORTS SIM • 1-4 PLAYERS
Average basketball sim.

WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER
EIDOS • FOOTY • 1-4 PLAYERS
Superb but never noticed for some reason.

WWF IN YOUR HOUSE
ACCLAIM • WRESTLING • 1-2 PLAYERS
No more wrestling games, please.

WWF WRESTLEMANIA
ACCLAIM • WRESTLING • 1-2 PLAYERS
Pathetic 'sport', pathetic 'game'. I said no more!

WRECKING CREW
TELSTAR • RACER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Underrated speedy cartoon racer.

X2
OCEAN • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Deep alien strategy. Absorbing.

X-COM: ENEMY UNKNOWN
MICROPROSE • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Deep alien strategy. Absorbing.

X GAMES PRO BOARDERS *
SONY • WINTER SPORTS • 1-2 PLAYERS
Fast with great graphics. Let down by control system.

X-COM:TFTD
MICROPROSE • STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
More alien strategy. Just as absorbing too.

X-MEN: COTA
ACCLAIM • BEAT 'EM UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
2D beat 'em-up in the *Street Fighter* mould.

XEVIOUS 3D/G+
SONY • SHOOT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
3D update of classic blaster that doesn't quite work.

YUSHA
JVC • FIGHTER • 1-2 PLAYERS
All the usual beat 'em-up business. Nothing special.

Z
SONY • ACTION/STRATEGY • 1 PLAYER
Wannabe *C&C* that's nowhere near as good.

ZERO DIVIDE
OCEAN • BEAT 'EM-UP • 1-2 PLAYERS
Poor attempt at a futuristic beat 'em up.

[LE MANS 24 HOURS]

CIRCADIAN CIRCUITS

Maddening speeds stretched out for an insane period of time? Bienvenue à Le Mans 24 heures, més amis.

Le Mans 24 Hours	
Publisher:	Infogrames
Developer:	Eutechnyx
Release Date:	May
Game Type:	Racing Sim
PAL Percentage Complete	55%

24 HOURS]

24

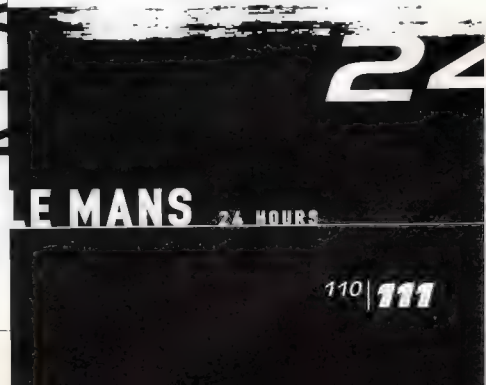
LE MANS 24 HOURS

SPIRIT
ENDURANCE
ENERGY
POWER
FORCE
CONTROL
DOMINATE
RESISTANCE
REACT

As most Blue Riband motor racing events have been duly covered by a videogaming interpretation, it was only a matter of time before one of the oldest and most highly regarded races found its way onto our joypads. Being a French company, it seems only right that Infogrames should take on the responsibility of turning the Le Mans twenty-four hour race into a potentially top-drawer PSX title to rival the *GT*s and *TOCA 2*s of this world.

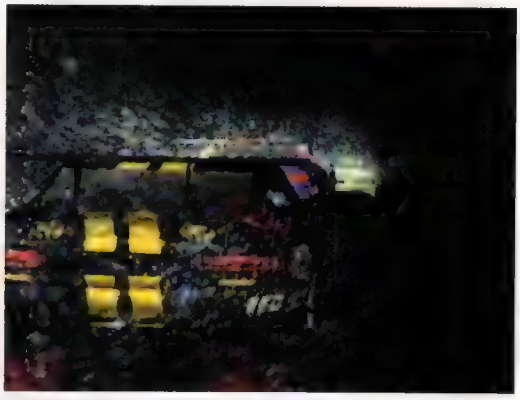
As it is a one-off annual event, the race doesn't generally receive the same sustained media coverage as Formula 1 or World Rallying, especially because it's tricky to televise a race that's effectively over a day long and half of which happens in pitch darkness. Yet it still attracts tens of thousands of spectators from around the world who revel in the unique and intense atmosphere it creates.

The original race occurred in the pioneering days of 1906, when one assumes the man with a red flag was allowed to have the day off. Hardy racers braved the gargantuan 103km long track that ran the length of the Sarthe Valley in northern France and on roads that were still open to public usage, leading to some →



CLASS WARFARE

The cars which compete in the 24 Heures du Mans are divided into three classes. GT 1 includes powerhouses such as the Lister Storm and ground-shaking Panoz, and follow rules of 'homologation' which decree there must be at least 200 road-going versions built that go on sale in showrooms, a rule intended to stop the production of freakishly powerful and expensive one-off cars. The GT 2 cars include highly modified production cars such as the venerable Porsche 911 and infamous Viper GTS, and allows privateer entries to compete who don't have an enormous works budget at their disposal. The most successful GT car of current times is the incredibly intimidating Mercedes CLK which weighs in at a cool million quid, but is just about the most powerful-looking beast you'll ever see on the road. In the third class it's possible to race the ultra-light and technologically temperamental LM Prototype vehicles, such as this groovy jet-black open cockpit Audi or the blood-red Ferrari 333 SP.



LEFT TO RIGHT: The trusty Porsche 911 has been a regular at Le Mans for almost thirty years now. However this one may get a drastic re-modelling job thanks to that spinning Nissan; avant-garde particle effects are also set to make an appearance, as this high-speed spray-mist demonstrates.

'chaotic' situations. Understandably the First World War put a stop to proceedings until the race was resurrected in 1923 under the direction of one George Durand. It then took place around a much truncated track more akin to the modern circuit in use today, and the field largely consisted of blue-blooded playboy aristocrat types, with Britain obviously putting on a jolly good show but only taking the winner's laurels in 1951 thanks to the sinuous Jaguar D-Type. Recent UK-born champions include Derek Bell and laconic TV presenter/sometime driver Martin Brundle, while the ever-keen Tiff Needell of *Top Gear* fame also competes regularly.

Around And Around And Around We Go...

Nowadays the rules have been tweaked so that the bulk of competitors come from the GT class of racing; meaning that instead of the manta-ray-like vehicles seen up until the end of the eighties (which were in essence re-bodied Formula One cars, and prohibitively quick and pricey) we now see cars such as McLaren F1s, Ferrari F40s, and the muscular Chrysler Viper take centre stage, a move which has brought the field much closer together and de-emphasised enormous technical budgets. The aim still remains to complete as many laps as possible in the allotted twenty-four hours, though, with most teams splitting the driving duties between three blokes.

The vast distances involved mean that, unlike in Grand Prix competition, long pit stops are not always disastrous and damage which seems apparently terminal can be rectified by the pit crews. All of which in turn means that the racing is of a very different flavour to the delicacies of Formula 1, and often the most reliable car driven with consistency rather than outright kamikaze speed comes up trumps. That isn't to say the contest isn't hard-fought, a fact that the many painfully wrecked cars left at the end of the day attest to.

Racing Heritage

Infogrames have enlisted the help of Newcastle-based coders Eutechnyx for Le Mans 24 Hours, a wise move considering the technical competence and general good reception for their more arcadified driving game *Max Power Racing*. A far greater emphasis will be placed on realism and technical accuracy with the main target

obviously being to reach the same levels of pleasingly anal tweakability as *Gran Turismo*. The real-life teams have been consulted at great length to ensure that tolerance and performance of the virtual cars match their steel and carbon fibre equivalents, with accurate representations of telemetry data available for the player's perusal after practice sessions or at the Test Track. These gauge and then graphically plot the car's speed and acceleration at particular points on the circuit, so impossibly fine adjustments can be made to the set-up in order to eke out the last possible scraps of velocity.

24 Hour Party People

The game isn't just based around the day-long spectacular itself, though: prior to that race it will be possible to tour the circuits of the world in a full season and compete for championship points in the GT League. There is also the added possibility of being offered a superior deal from a rival team and thus transferring your skills to a new better-paying and equipped organisation, adding a welcome management element into the mix. It will even be possible to assess their performance data and take the proffered car out for a test drive to see if it is any cop!

For the less patient player a quick-fix Arcade mode eschews pit stops, qualifying and the like and jumps straight to the racing, while at the other extreme the Endurance option lets you take on the full twenty-four hour race – the wimpy can employ the Save and Load facility if they can't hack the whole shebang in one sitting. Being a round-the-clock event means, of course, around half the race takes place after nightfall, with only the car's headlamps to light the way ahead and spot any potential danger. This aspect has been admirably well-realised in the game thanks to a sophisticated real-time light sourcing system. As the daylight fades progressively through to dusk and then total darkness the cars flick on their hi-intensity halogens, the beams of which dynamically illuminate the relevant sections of the track or other vehicles. Each source of light possesses its own individual texture, thereby creating a convincing impression of both static and moving luminescence.

"Hardy racers braved the gargantuan 103km long track that ran the length of the Sarthe Valley in northern France and on roads that were still open to public usage, leading to some 'chaotic' situations..."

Rain On My Parade Lap

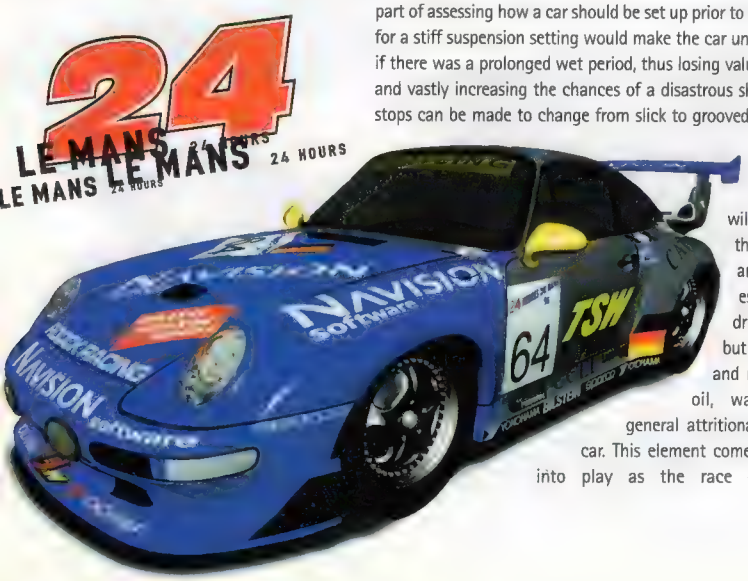
Other environmental hazards include the extremely unpredictable meteorological conditions, as the race takes place in June, a month notorious in the area for sudden and drastic changes in the weather. Over the entire twenty-four hours an awful lot of rain can fall, and thus the weather forecast becomes an integral →

CIRCUIT TRAINING

The current track has changed in several fundamental ways since the original modern race in 1923. Part dedicated circuit and part public roads it is far longer than any current Grand Prix track, weighing in at a stamina-sapping 13km; meaning a lap at an average speed of 125mph takes a shade under four minutes to complete. Originally it boasted one of the longest sections of cornerless roadway in all motorsports, the notorious Mulsanne Straight, upon which cars would reach a staggering terminal velocity of around 230mph. This was deemed just too dangerous in safety-conscious modern times, leading to the insertion of two chicanes to limit speed, a move which has effectively emasculated the circuit for many. Nonetheless it is still a formidable track with a very individual look and feel of its own, a quality that Eutechnyx were keen to capture accurately. Photos were taken on-site to ensure the computerised Circuit de Sarthe was visually accurate, with measurements being taken for values such as comparative height, road camber, track width, building locations and so forth, a process verified by the French organisers, who drove a virtual car around the digital track to ensure its authenticity.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Hard-fought racing like this will be very firmly on the agenda in Le Mans 24 Hours, perhaps even more so than in the real thing; the headlight-flare effects in the night-time sequences appear remarkable from these shots, and assuming they look as good in motion will set a new graphical standard for other games to aspire to; the Viper is just as at home on a hard-fought racetrack as it is posing down a Mediterranean seafront with a millionaire behind its steering wheel.

"...this means the racing is of a very different flavour to the delicacies of Formula 1, with often the most reliable car driven with consistency rather than outright kamikaze speed coming up trumps..."



part of assessing how a car should be set up prior to the race – as going for a stiff suspension setting would make the car unwieldy and skittish if there was a prolonged wet period, thus losing valuable average time and vastly increasing the chances of a disastrous shunt. Of course pit stops can be made to change from slick to grooved tyres if necessary, and during the course of the day each team will undertake up to thirty of them. These are not only essential to change drivers and refuel; but also to monitor and replenish levels of oil, water and watch general attritional damage on the car. This element comes more and more into play as the race grows older, as thoroughbred racing cars aren't really meant to compete for periods of much longer than four or five hours and the delicate balances between lightness and resilience regularly become over-stretched. In the real world, cars often enter the pits with their brake discs alight or missing wheels after accidents, yet the pit crews are able to replace any component apart from the engine block and chassis in order to get it back on the track. Le Mans 24 Hours should reflect this, although the downside is that a tired mechanic may make some kind of mistake while the car is up on its jacks, losing more precious time.

The damage inflicted upon the cars is calculated progressively, with wear and tear factored into the equation that leads to failure in delicate components such as the gear box or turbocharger, plus

It'll come as no surprise that Sony's ninja-like marketing department have managed to sneak PlayStation branding onto the side of a Le Mans car.

tyres will lose their grip if pushed too hard and could possibly blow out with disastrous consequences. On top of this creeping form of damage cars can of course also suffer physically from crashes and impacts.

The effect of these prangs is calculated through mathematically considering not just the speed of collision but also the angle of incidence and the material involved, meaning some areas of the car are more vulnerable than others. On top of this pleasing attention to detail (a path blazed by *TOCA 2* in particular) it is thankfully possible for the cars to spin and ultimately flip and roll over, with each collision being calculated 'on-the-fly', using accurate motion physics which ensure the crashes will be blood-curdlingly realistic and hence satisfying. Good on yer, Eutechnyx!

Other technical achievements that should bear fruit in the finalised version of the game is the return of the impressive 'Fiddler' graphics engine as seen in *Max Power Racing* that virtually does away with pop-up entirely (an unwelcome visual visitor that handicapped the otherwise stellar *TOCA 2*), and lets the game run in 512x240 hi-res mode at a respectable (if not exactly first-division) 25 frames per second. The sixteen-strong field of cars are each constructed from around five hundred polygons and boast trendy and alluring shiny-surface effects that add the final sheen to the visual realism. It all sounds genuinely mouth-watering, and from the way these smart screenshots and the basic game code look it seems that *GT 2* may have a serious fight on its hands, as long as Eutechnyx don't go down the misguided path of making it too 'accessible' for the layman gamer by blanding out the handling and technical aspects.

"It will even be possible to assess their performance data and take the car out for a test drive to see if it is any cop!"

Quick Flick

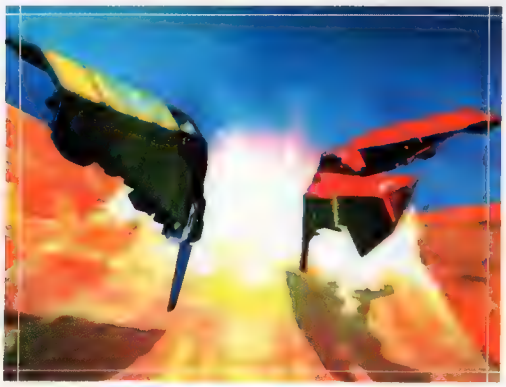
The film buffs among you may already know that a couple of movies have been made which centre around the epic race. One of those, *Le Mans scorciatoia per l'inferno* (or *Le Mans: Road To Hell*) made in 1970 is unfortunately in Italian. This leaves us with the film simply entitled *Le Mans* (1971) starring the legendary Steve McQueen. It's a top class movie and no mistake, there's no schmaltzy Hollywood romance to get in the way as we witness the trials and tribulations of a man obsessed with racing and more importantly, winning. Unfortunately, getting hold of a copy of the video has proven to be damn near impossible, so you'll just have to watch telly and pray that BBC2 or Channel 4 decide to show a season of McQueen movies and include it, because it is worth seeing.

Monitor

Your monthly handle on the changing face of PlayStation gaming

News Index: WipEout is back – R4 tournaments [page 116] Emulation Station – Premium Metal [page 117] Vigilante 9 – Square into Europe [page 118] Formula for trouble [page 119] Akuji the Amless – Metal Machine competition [page 122] Deep Treasures eye candy [page 123] Tech bits – Shrunken Station – Unreality check [page 124]

Wipe it out, WipEout, wah wah wah...



A long-overdue third helping of the seminal WipEout series is at last on the cards, Psygnosis have announced, in spite of the fact that virtually all of the development team responsible for the original games have upped sticks and left the company. Eight new tracks, three new race teams and Dual Shock compatibility are expected features to be presented in the new game (pencilled in for an autumn release), but hopefully a credo of 'If it ain't broke...' will be followed to avoid repeating the unmitigated disaster that was *F1 '98*. Worryingly they also hint that the sequel will be 'targeted at a broad spectrum of players', which usually implies that the game will be a dumbed-down version of what has come before. STATION suggests that improved enemy ship AI, a four way split screen/link-up option, a full replay mode and a rear-view option would be better things to start looking into...

Jog Racing Time

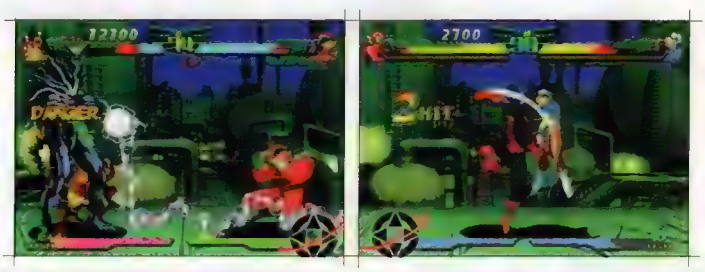
Ridge Racer 4 has been so successful that Namco have set up a special official league in Japan, for the eager eastern speed freaks have been hard at it since last Christmas. A top 50 is currently available on-line, with the best time as we went to press standing at 2'40"534 in the normal MMM/AGS car championship on the 'Edge of The Earth' track. Stiff competition, certainly. The JogCon peripheral is the device of choice for almost every one of the entrants.

As it looks now – but will public competition catch on over here?

BETA ZONE

TITLE: MARVEL SUPER HEROES VS STREET FIGHTER
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
RELEASE: OUT NOW (US)

This is the biggest 2D fighter from Capcom for some time. The Japanese love it and hordes of import gamers and comic fans would give their right arm for a copy of what looks like being the pinnacle of 2D beat 'em-ups. Thankfully Capcom have added new modes in addition to the arcade game – like they did with *Rival Schools*. The huge cast of characters should make this an essential buy – if the PAL coversion is any good.



iNFO STATION

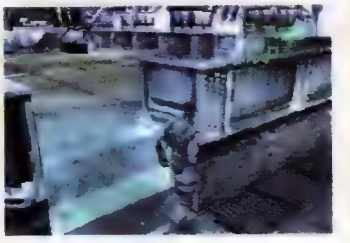
Top Gun 2000
European publisher Titus has bought the rights to perhaps the ultimate aerial film licence, *Top Gun*. A PlayStation version is due next year. Rumours of a Kelly McGillis sub game were denied...

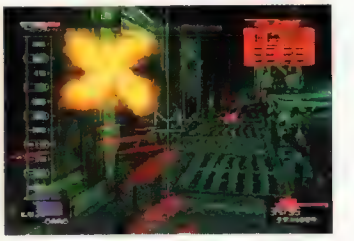
Dreamcast Glitch Hitch
Sega's key Dreamcast title, *Virtua Fighter 3tb*, has a number of serious glitches in it. This suggests that the title was rushed and, of course, means that it isn't as polished a conversion as *Tekken 3*.

Devil Inside
Glorified *Gauntlet* clone *Diablo* is going to get a follow-up, in customary Electronic Arts style. Work on the PC version is underway so a PSX port is pretty darn likely too.

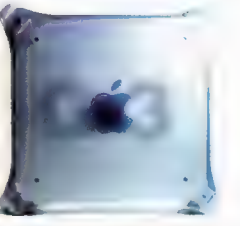
Premium Metals

When Metal Gear Solid is released, 8000 lucky punters will be able to purchase a £54.99 Premium pack which includes the full game, soundtrack CD, redesigned tee shirt, a giant film style A0 poster, memory card stickers with character decals and a fold out postcard set. This huge bundle comes in a natty silver box with commemorative dog tags as well. Jesus, it sounds like we're selling china plates too. The CD is available separately for £7.99 or £2.99 if you pre-order the game from HMV. For import fact fans, the music CD is the music solely from the PlayStation game – the Japanese version strangely also featured music from the ten year old MSX *Metal Gear* title. This marketing blitz is joined by the UK release of the action figures featured last issue – they should cost £11.99 for a set of two. We reckon the whole Premium pack is a bargain and that you should get on down to your game emporium and reserve yours quick sharp.





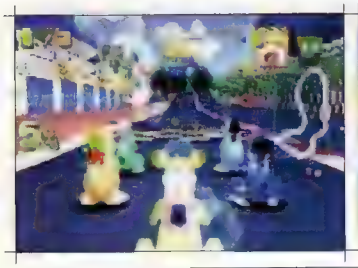
Emulation PlayStation



PC and Mac users can now buy a piece of software which allows them to place PlayStation games in their drives and happily play away as if they actually owned a PlayStation. The US software company that produces the Connectix Virtual Game Station sells it for $49 , roughly £30. Releases that work with the emulator include *Metal Gear Solid*, the *Tekken* series and *Gran Turismo*. As the Macintosh games scene is about as exciting as an evening in with Jeremy Paxman and some *Star Trek* vids, the emulator has been very successful, but Sony hasn't yet commented on the situation. Pads and joysticks can be configured to work with the emulator which runs NTSC versions of the games rather than the inferior PAL versions, which puts Sony Europe in a strange situation. To play something like *Tekken 3* properly in the UK – ie playing the original Japanese or US version – you have to have a chipped PlayStation or a personal computer instead. Roy McDonald the president of Connectix commented on the emulator, lauding it's use for Apple Macintosh users: 'Connectix Virtual Game Station is designed to enable users to run some of the world most popular games right on their Macintosh G3s and should significantly expand the gaming possibilities of the Macintosh platform.

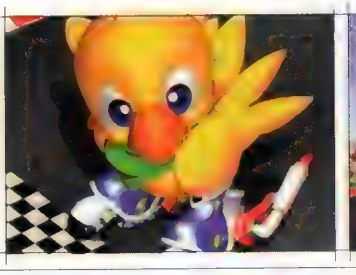
TITLE: BOMBERMAN FANTASY RACING
PUBLISHER: HUDSON
RELEASE: TBC

There are no bounds for Hudson's increasingly popular figurehead, he's now in his own *Mario Kart* style romp. As you can, the vehicles are the kangaroo 'Louies' from the recent *Bomberman* releases as well as other cute animal based means of transport, such as rhinos and humorous power ups. It also looks very similar to one of the Dreamcast's first releases, *Pen Pen Triathalon*.



TITLE: CHOCOBO RACING
PUBLISHER: SQUARE
RELEASE: MARCH (JAPAN)

While *Final Fantasy VIII* has finally hit the shelves of Japanese stores, the Chocobo Race element of it's predecessor has made it into a whole new game. It's no coincidence that both Mr Bomberman and the emu-esque Chocobo have racing games released at a similar time. At the moment, *Chocobo Racing* looks to be slightly behind *Bomberman*, but we'll have to see how the two shape up in the next couple of issues.



iNFO STATION

Stop Bugging Lara

Eidos have sheepishly made public an idiosyncratic bug that has come to light in *Tomb Raider III*. Saving the game in the room with a many-limbed statue on the Temple Ruins level and then returning to it later will lock shut previously opened doors, making the game impossible to finish.

Original Sim

With a generous and regal flourish Electronic Arts have decreed that the original version of their seminal God game *Sim City* will be released as a piece of shareware on the world-wide web, which means that you can own the game for nothing, and all to celebrate its tenth anniversary. The relevant internet address is http://www.simcity.com.

Final Fight... Again

Classic scrolling beat 'em-up *Final Fight* is getting a 3D makeover, Capcom have announced, with all the favourite sluggers of yore such as Hagger, Guy and Cody making a polygonal return. More news in the following issue.

Sweet Nothings

This month's nuggets from the world of PR speak:

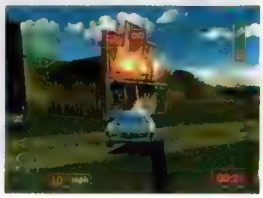
"The cars will feature new state of the art physics allowing your car to actually physically dent and crush upon impact. A feature yet to be seen in a PlayStation title"
***CARMAGEDDON* – SCI**

"Get your *Wing Over* and 'Don't even *Yo* there' Tom 'pun-tastic' Hedges of JVC –
WING OVER* AND *YO YO'S PARK

"Win a crate of beer delivered to your desk"
THQ desperately trying to promote *WCW/NWO THUNDER* cheaply

Vigilante 9?

Work on the follow up to seventies-tinged car combat favourite Vigilante 8 is already underway, according to Activision. Sub-headed 'The Second Offence' and developed again by Luxoflux Corp it will include the expected range of new vehicles, weaponry and superfly characters battling it out for vehicular supremacy, plus a more comprehensive and diverse incarnation of the popular Quest Mode and overall graphical facelift. Now that's just *too* damn funky.



European Square Base

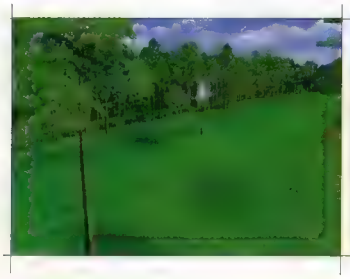
Finally, after the breakthrough UK release of Final Fantasy VII, Square have set up a London based office, which not only bodes well for eventual releases of more Square games in this country but shows that the Japanese company has finally recognised the UK following it has. The impressive beat 'em up Ehrgeiz, reviewed this issue, will not be released in Europe though. When pushed for a statement, Square Europe organiser Tomohiro Yoshikai couldn't comment on the Ehrgeiz situation but commented 'we are going to do marketing and sales for the PAL territory. It will enable Square to have a better understanding of the market requirements and to provide better services. We will also have a Q&A department to make sure that the localisation of our products has been done properly'.

TITLE: PRO GOLF
PUBLISHER: EMPIRE
RELEASE: NOVEMBER

A surprise release from Empire this one – it's a conversion of the PC title and looks a lot nicer, in still shots at least, than *Actua Golf*. The two courses featured in the game are Cornwall's St Mellion and Hilton Head in South Carolina. The usual stroke or match play modes are included. Likely to appeal to the more serious golfer, we reckon – a halfway house between *Actua* and *Tiger Woods*.

TITLE: STREET SKATER
PUBLISHER: EA
RELEASE: APRIL

Keen to associate itself with hip extreme sports, EA are about to release *Street Skater*, a title which promises to offer you the virtual experience of riding a selection of boards, including those of the snake variety. Skate around the numerous urban levels and associated terrain, or hone your skills in the Skate Park, the choice could well be yours. Watch out for more information in next month's STATION.



Harbinger Of Doom

The creator of comic book anti-hero Spawn, Todd McFarlane, has been employed to write the script for the forthcoming *Doom* motion picture, a move which should fit in well with the grinningly nihilistic scenario of the genre-defining game.

Bunch Of Arse

Backroom negotiations have been reported in the tabloid press about a potential deal between Sony and Arsenal pertaining to the PlayStation logo appearing on the Gunners' kit, something both parties have been strenuously denying, which implies that it's probably true. What next, Mario on Wimbledon's shirts?

Metal Gear Loaded

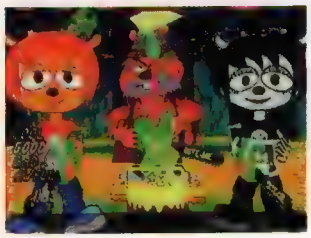
With barely concealed glee, Konami have stated that *Metal Gear Solid* has already exceeded their sale expectations, with over 2 million units flying off the shelves (not counting, of course, the upcoming European release). Don't be surprised if we start hearing news of *Metal Gear 2* pretty soon...

Formula For Trouble

In a move likely to raise hackles at Psygnosis, big-wallet Eidos have signed a deal with Japanese publishers Video System in order to allow them to distribute a PlayStation game based around the FIA Formula One World championship, which will be effectively a re-written version of the frankly cacky *F1 World Grand Prix* (as seen on those godawful N64 TV ads). How Psygnosis will react to the news that their biggest rival is essentially using the same 'official' licence that they paid out shedloads of money for remains to be seen. The game should arrive in the summertime, though it seems it will bafflingly be based around out-of-date 1998 season data.

PaRappa The Rocker?

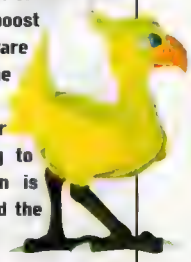
It seems the tardy sequel to cheekily popular rhymin' dog simulator *PaRrappa the Rapper* will be titled *Um Jammer Lammy* and centred not on the beanie-hatted dope pooch but upon a female rock star called Lammy who wants to take her band on the road. Presumably the quirky Japanese humour and off-beat raps will be eschewed in favour of power chords and poodle perms, a decision that we at STATION believe can only end in tears.



NIPPON NEWS

POCKET (MONEY) STATION

In a move likely to cause grumbles on these shores, Sony Japan has announced that the price of a PlayStation will drop from 16, 800 to 15, 000 yen on January 23rd, meaning at current exchange rates the console costs around about £80. The major reason for this is of course to take the steam out of the Dreamcast's first couple of months of availability and also to coincide with the release of *Final Fantasy VIII* in order to boost the sales of both hardware and software (much in the manner that *Zelda* has helped shift N64s). Whether this will be passed along to European consumers soon is uncertain, but rest assured the UK arrival of Sega's great white hope will not be met gently by the merciless Sony marketing assassins.



EXCUSE ME, BUT WHERE IS THE TRAIN STATION?

The optimistically-named Success Corp will achieve what may be a first for the PSX by releasing a dedicated piece of educational software. Called 'Thursday' it is an English-conversation teaching aid that enables Japanese users to learn our noble mother tongue whilst watching films, with each movie divided over three or more discs. That sound you can hear is thousands of slacker kiddies shuddering at the thought of their beloved toy being turned into a source of homework.

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iNFO STATION

Dear Diva

In a questionable move, Square have enlisted the vocal talents of Asian pop star Faye Wong to sing the main theme for *FF VIII*. 'Eyes On Me' will be released both in chart-friendly format and pretentious orchestral arrangement. The fee? A cool million dollars.

Pocket Problems

Sony's glorified memory card, the PocketStation, has been delayed until February after missing the original pre-Christmas shipping date. Is that noise the sound of hundreds of hearts dropping? Probably not, no.

Blotter Blaster

Breaking from their RPG fixation, Square are apparently planning a shoot 'em-up in the mould of consciousness-expanding classic *Tempest*. In lieu of Jeff Minter's *Tempest 3000* unlikely arrival on the PSX, this will have to do for now.

Pleasure and Pain

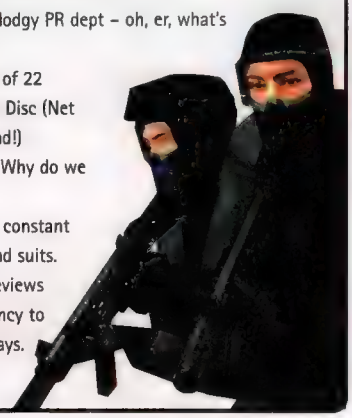
Here's an insight into the mind of STATION – some of this month's celebratory statements and groans of complaint.

Full on Fantasies

- PAL *Metal Gear Solid* – hurrah!
- Neo-Geo Pocket – Bulging trouser action.
- Reader's letters – thanks people – more please.
- Some bint called Hayley.
- Emulators – We've gone EMU loopy.
- Darren's dirty weekends.
- Driver – Good? It will be.

Dodgy Dreams

- Richie's RPG overload – 'I can't take no more'.
- Mobile Phone bills.
- Take Two's dodgy PR dept – oh, er, what's a magazine?
- OPMs claim of 22 Demos on one Disc (Net Yaroze overload!)
- Deadlines – Why do we have 'em?
- Lips and his constant mincing around suits.
- A certain Reviews Editor's tendancy to swing both ways.



Akuji the Armless

Following in the footsteps of *Resident Evil*, *FFVII* and *Metal Gear Solid* ,Crystal Dynamics' voodoo adventure *Akuji the Heartless* will soon spawn its own range of plastic action figures, so that you can re-create the blackest moments from the game. The main man Akuji, his bride Kesho and *Live and Let Die* favourite Baron Samedi complete the chicken-bleeding range. Check your local import dealer for the no doubt vastly inflated prices these will carry when they arrive sometime in the Spring.

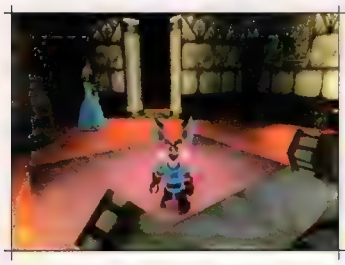
METAL MACHINE MUSIC COMPO

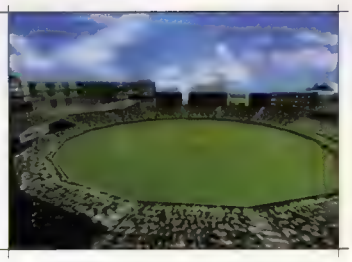
TITLE: KINGSLEY
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS
RELEASE: APRIL

After the disappointing *Rascal* and disastrous *Lomax in Lemmingland*, ailing Liverpudlian publishers Psygnosis are pinning their hopes on a cute fox to take them into the hearts of the new selection of younger PlayStation gamers. It's predictable sweet run and jump action along the themed levels and we have to say that we're anticipating this as much as the Spice Girls single boxset.

TITLE: CRICKET WORLD CUP '99
PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
RELEASE: TBA

Another Electronic Arts sporting behemoth of a title is on the way, and it's already at loggerheads with the classy *Brian Lara Cricket*, as Codemasters are publicly refuting many of EAs technical claims about the game that are being made at the expense of *BLC*. We'll update you on this particular bitch fight next month, and try to get a sneak preview of the game itself in the process.





EYE CANDY

Deep Treasures

This lady has been pulled in to promote Konami's new hope, *Divers Dream*, to folow in the footsteps of stable mate, the humungous *Metal Gear Solid*. The promising title is a strange synergy of an RPG and the Sony game *Treasures of The Deep*. We'll have a review next month incidentally.

TECH BITS

PRO CARRY CAE

PRODUCED BY: Blaze

PRICE: £19.99

RATING: Not my bag!

An executive-styled briefcase presumably designed for smuggling your PSX through customs. A fetish-friendly rubber coating and space for a somewhat paltry four games alongside console and peripherals make this reasonably useful, although the bloody great 'BLAZE' logo stamped on the side destroys any air of discretion.

NASCAR RACE PRO

PRODUCED BY: Thrustmaster

PRICE: £69.99

RATING: Alright, but pricey

An attractive and solid-feeling wheel with a nice twist action and grippy circumference is badly let down by the flimsy and small-sized foot pedals. Ingeniously however, the wheel can be gripped between the knees for added stability during violent movements, although the bit you squeeze is a touch too shallow if you've got manly thighs.

SPACE STATION

PRODUCED BY: Logic 3

PRICE: £17.99

RATING: Tidy

What with the spaghetti junction of peripherals and suchlike cluttering up most PSX owners' carpets, this bit of space-maximising kit will lift and separate your telly, console and joypads and allow them to be stored snugly inside its stylish grey hull, along with a caddy with space for ten games. Sleek design and intense practicality make this a top buy for slobs.

EXPLORER V2

PRODUCED BY: Blaze

PRICE: £29.99

RATING: Devious

We simply had to recommend this one again as it provides so much more for your cheatin' pound than the Action Replay. A streamlined user interface and bang-up-to date codes keep this at the top of the pile for boxes of dirty tricks.

MULTIPLAYER ADAPTER

PRODUCED BY: InterAct

PRICE: £19.99

RATING: Costly

Shaped like a practice putting hole, this MultiTap clone deviates from the L-shaped official product and also boasts a less sturdy build quality. However as there are virtually no moving parts this doesn't matter a great deal, although ironically it did have some problems accepting the sockets from the Sony joypads. As this is the same price as the 'proper' multi-tap it seems a bit of a dead duck, unfortunately.

USA TODAY

NOW NO-ONE IS TIGER WOODS

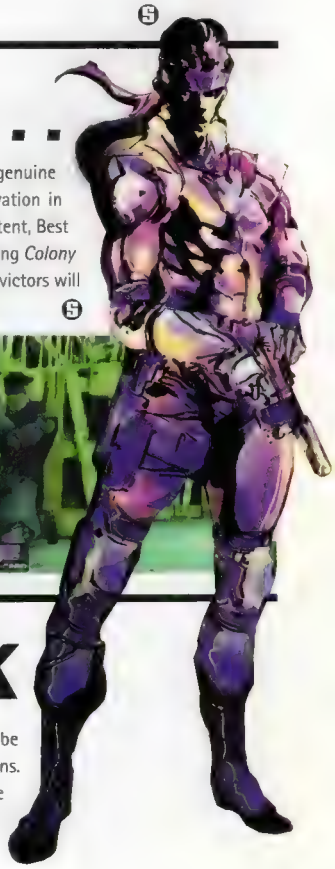
In an inspired piece of situationist anarchistic data-graffiti, some scamp has apparently inserted a highly profane *South Park* trailer surreptitiously onto 100, 000 US copies of *Tiger Woods '99 PGA Tour*. Unused space on the disc has been stealthily appropriated to store the naughty snippet which has so incensed the Mom's Apple Pie sensibilities of Electronic Arts that they have recalled every copy, citing the 'material' as 'objectionable'. This is a debatable move on the part of EA as a free added bonus adventure of Kenny and pals on every game would spice up their tediously white bread output no end.

Shrunken Console

The SNK Corporation in Japan (once responsible for the marvellous *Ikari Warriors*, useless trivia fans) are teaming up with our pals Fire International to bring you the Neo-Geo Pocket, a monochromatic rival to the Game Boy. A 16bit CPU makes it technically more powerful than the Nintendo handheld on paper, although the eight-shade monochromatic display may seem a little lo-fi after seeing the Colour Game Boy. Added attractions include a built-in calendar, world clock, horoscope and alarm, while Dreamcast compatibility is also a bonus (although we're not sure what this entails as yet). The unit comes in at a competitive £49.99, with games (including *King of Fighters*, *Baseball Stars*, *Neo-Geo Cup* – a golf game – and *Samurai Spirits*) retailing between £24.99 and £29.99.

And The Winner Is...

In yet another indication that the once-reviled videogame is at last being considered as a genuine art form, the Milia d'Or awards has again accepted nominations for quality and innovation in entertainment software. Categories include Most Impressive Gameplay, Excellence in Content, Best Real-Time Interactivity and Hottest Multiplayer Game, with PlayStation front-runners including *Colony Wars: Vengeance*, *Tekken 3*, *Gran Turismo*, *Bust-a-Groove* and of course *Metal Gear Solid*. The victors will be honoured at a glamorous evening at the Palais de Festivals on February 8th.



Unreality Check

Bournemouth-developed PC *Doom* clone favourite *Unreal* will unexpectedly be converted to the PSX it seems, with GT Interactive and developers Aardvark at the reins. Whether the lush graphics of the accelerated graphics-chip original can be adequately translated to the grey box remains to be seen, but barring the superb *Half-Life* this was the best first person shooter of recent times.

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Inside

PlayStation business news for the more discerning gamer

Inside Index: [page 126] McGovern is back again – Euro-chart first [page 127] Psygnosis shut down in US – Charitable definitions – Activision end on high – UK market booming

Hot Stuff At HotGen

There's a new kid in town, but it wears a familiar mask. Fergus McGovern is back with his new venture, HotGen.

Fergus McGovern, founder of Probe (*Forsaken, Alien Resurrection*), has returned to the world of videogames and further consolidated Britain's role as a market leader with the foundation of new development label HotGen Studios.

HotGen is a London based outfit, and sees McGovern's welcome return to the industry after he quit Acclaim last summer – Acclaim having previously acquired Probe. He is joined at HotGen by his brother Kevin, also a co-founder of Probe, and his absence from the industry has been due to involvement with other business interests, notably e-commerce giant, Trillion. It has been speculated that the two companies will team up to collectively offer on-line gaming at discount rates.

Publishers already signing up material include Virgin, Europress and possibly EA, although HotGen will retain all intellectual property rights for their work.

Explaining the compound formation of the company name, McGovern said 'our history shows that we did top ten titles, hot products and biggest videogames ever, so that's where the 'Hot' comes from. And 'Gen' refers to next generation of video entertainment and also means knowledge.'

Watch out for games bearing their portmanteau moniker this Christmas time.

In Need Of A Little TLC

As reported last month, The Learning Company has acquired paragons of the plastic plaything, Mattel. Now, however, they find themselves sued by their own shareholders.

The Learning Company said it will 'vigorously' fight the multiple lawsuits filed against it by shareholders seeking to stymie the $3.8 billion deal agreed with Mattel in December.

Some analysists have questioned why TLC wanted the toy manufacturer in the first place, as they have consistently shown slow rates of growth in recent years when compared to booming software sales. The nub of the legal action, however, is based around allegations that the board of directors breached its fiduciary duty in approving the merger.

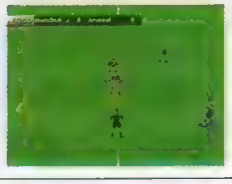
Euro Chart Maps Out Way For Co-operation

Under threat from rivals PC Data, market researchers ChartTrack have finally completed their first joint project with German firm GfK – a pan-European, all format chart.

A European Top 20 of videogames has been published jointly by ChartTrack and German market research giants GfK, the two groups are also currently involved in talks about future projects, possibly involving some form of merger, although director Dorian Bloch said that details were yet 'to be decided'.

The all format chart undeniably proves the power of the PlayStation, placing *Gran Turismo* firmly at number one over the first three quarters of last year, selling 733,000 units, despite only being available on the Sony format. Nearest rival *World Cup 98* shifted 731,688 whilst third place *FIFA: RTWC '98* achieved 594,183. Of course these figures will be vastly altered once the Christmas period has been assessed and the fourth quarter releases (*Tomb Raider III, FIFA '99*) included, but it is reassuring to note that the nearest Nintendo-only game, *Goldeneye*, is already several years old and only placed ninth, behind the even older *Tomb Raider*!

The chart beats rivals PC Data, who were compiling a similar list, to publication. Bloch commented that 'I think it will be an uphill struggle for them now in terms of getting something European off the ground'.



EUROPEAN TOP 10

(all formats – UK, Repub. Ireland, France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Holland, Belgium – Q1-Q3 1998)

1. Gran Turismo – 733,000
2. World Cup 98 – 731,688
3. FIFA: RTWC '98 – 594,183
4. Tomb Raider 2 – 518,287
5. Resident Evil 2 – 369,510
6. Tomb Raider – 335,430
7. Tekken 2 – 269,813
8. Crash Bandicoot – 268,445
9. Goldeneye 007 – 233,544
10. Anno 1602 – 232,674

Psygnosis out of US

The troubled Liverpool firm has closed its final US development office and cancelled all internal projects on the far side of the Atlantic.

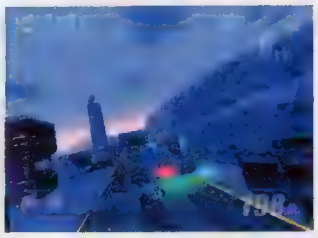
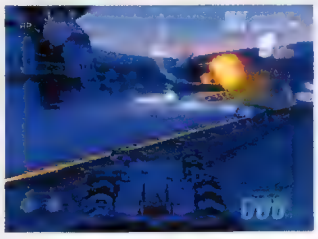
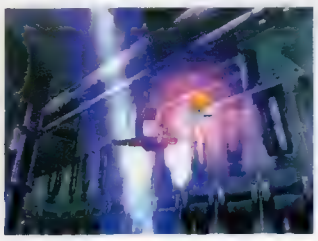
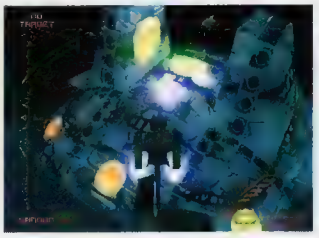
After repeated batterings from press and punters alike, Psygnosis is set to become solely a third-party publisher in the USA, as its final development office in San Francisco has closed and all projects shelved.

News of consolidating its European base is yet vague, although a return to form looks hopefully apparent with the excellent *Rollcage*, developed by ATD, and *G-Police 2*, an internal affair.

20 staff were made redundant in the move, while a similar number remain at the Foster City offices 15 miles away. They are currently planning the release of *Motorcross Madness* for the PSX, as licensed from Microprose, along with several titles for the PC.

A deal has been signed, however, with industry giants Activision, who will now distribute Psygnosis titles throughout North America. This is beneficial because of the way in which publishers must buy space in retail outlets on the far side of the Atlantic, by promoting their products in Activision 'space' they should gaurantee extra exposure.

This news comes at the same time that nine staff left the 60 strong workforce at its development base in Stroud, although global MD Gary Johnson remains optimistic about the future of the company stateside, saying 'the development of product in North America remains a key component of Psygnosis' worldwide plans'. Psygnosis retain offices accross Britain and also in Paris.

Stealing From The Poor Box?

Industry comes under fire and allegations of nepotism as ELSPA receives second largest share of the charity pie.

Rows have broken out within the sections of the industry regarding money earmarked for charitable causes raised from game sales last year. More than £1m was raised through donated royalties last year, and this largesse has been highlighted throughout the industry press, but upon closer inspection the altruism is not all it is cracked up to be.

Main benefactor from the philanthropy of publishers was the Prince's Trust, netting a cool half million pounds, but criticism has been levelled at number two in the recipient charts, none other than anti-piracy outfit ELSPA. Most of the charities who received sums from software gained between £5,000 and £10,000, although the Alder Hey hospital in Liverpool was also given £100,000, and Great Ormond Street £65,000.

Whilst piracy within the industry is undoubtedly a problem which we ourselves have highlighted, it is perhaps a little misleading to call donations to ELSPA 'charity' or highlight them as a good cause – it is, after all, more like protecting one's own.

It is notable, however, that 1998 was a record breaking year for fund-raising in the software industry, and should set the standard for years to come.

Activision Posts Record Results

Closing the year on an all time high, Activision has released financial records for the last three months of '98, showing some remarkable achievements.

Activision has posted its financial turnover results for the final quarter of the last calendar year, showing a 58% increase in turnover upon the similar period the previous year.

Turnover increased from £74m in Sept – Dec 1997 to £118m in 1998, and has largely been attributed to sales of crowd pleasers *Apocalypse*, *Tenchu* and *Asteroids*. However it appears that Activision is not content to sit on the proverbial laurels – future success is planned through franchising and new business acquisitions, as well as through further triple 'A' releases. Senior Vice President International, Bob Dewar, said 'what we're really pleased with is the fact that titles we banked on have come through for us ... the next step for us is obviously to continue to grow because we want to be a $1 billion organisation'.

Globally, Europe counted for over half of the groups business, reflecting growing numbers of gamers in the established markets and also new, relatively untapped resources such as France (see issue 5).

UK Market Hits £1.2 Billion

End of year figures come pouring in around this time, and the UK market appears to have been as interesting, and bouyant, as ever.

The UK games market has soared through the £1 billion mark, achieving sales of approximately £1.2 billion during 1998 as software sales totalled £882 million and hardware sales reached £235 million.

Approximately 30 million game units were shifted during the year as a whole, with the console market accounting for some 51 per cent, headed by the PlayStation Platinum range.

Top individual company, however, was EA, shifting an impressive 3.6 million units in the UK, grossing some £110 million.

UK firm Eidos also figured highly on home turf, beating all other European outfits to 1.8 million units of sales, valued at £55 million.

Although Nintendo's *Zelda: Ocharina of Time* shot to number one in the all format charts at the end of January, the console itself still remains very much third fiddle behind PC and PlayStation formats, with Christmas sales down on last year. PlayStation remains, simply, the best.

Taking Control

PREMIER MANAGER '99

There couldn't be anything simpler than this: point and click your way around the self explanatory menus, then sit back and watch the match.
If only real life were like that I hear you cry.

CONTROLS

←,→,↓,↑	Move cursor around the screen
●	Select
■	Exit current menu

VIVA FOOTBALL

The footie theme continues with this mix and match from history. Each button has two roles, one for when you have the ball, and one for when you don't.

CONTROLS

←,→,↑,↓	Player movement	
✕	Attack	– Tap: Simple Pass
		– Double Tap: One–Two
		– Hold: Pass ahead of player
	Defence	– Tap: Block Tackle
	Free Kick/Corner	– Hold for Power meter, release and then hold for swerve
●	Attack	– Hold: Kick
		– Tap: Snap Shot
		– Hold and D-pad: Aimed shot
	Defence	– Panic clearance
■	Attack	– Hold: Kick
		– Tap: Tap ball ahead
	Defence	– Tap: Slide tackle
	Free Kick/Corner	– Same as ✕
▲	Attack	– Chip
	Defence	– Change Player
R1	Sprint	
L1	Attack	– Jump Challenge
R2	Attack	– Hold: Cross
	Defence	– Tap: Punch
L2	Defence	– Goalkeeper rush

We've given you the disc, and now it's only fair that we tell you how to use it. Taking Control is our monthly breakdown of the buttons and sticks you'll need to get to grips with in order to enjoy the demos fully.

WARZONE 2100

Strategy with full 32bit graphics. A game to please those after the thrill of front line action and those who want a more intellectual challenge. here's the fundamentals of getting around.

CONTROLS

DRIVING CONTROLS

- ← – Turn left
- → – Turn right
- ↑ – Accelerate
- ↓ – Decelerate
- START – Access in game menu
- SELECT – Toggle between shoot at features/ don't shoot at features

BUTTON CONTROLS

- ○ – Attack/Activate/Select
- ✕ – Select/Deselect units
- □ – Open/Close reticule
- △ – Access battlemap
- R1 – Cycle to next unit
- R2 – Cycle leader to next unit in group
- L1, L2 – Cycle through assigned groups

MAP CONTROLS

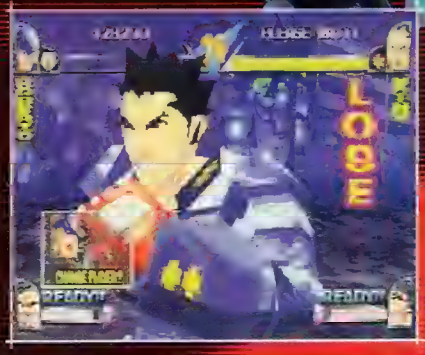
- L2 + ✕, ○, □, △ – Assigns groups
- L1 + ✕, ○, □, △ – Selects groups
- L2 + ←, → – Rotate view left/right
- L2 + ↑ – Pitch view up
- L2 + ↓ – Pitch view down
- L1 + ↑ – Zoom view in
- L1 + ↓ – Zoom view out

RIVAL SCHOOLS

The toughest school in town will teach you the ultimate lesson, unless you know how to fight back, of course.

CONTROLS

- ←, → – Left/Right
- ↑ – Jump
- ↓ – Crouch
- ✕ – Light kick
- ○ – Light punch
- □ – Heavy kick
- △ – Heavy punch
- R1 – Dodge
- R2 – Throw
- L1 – Special attack 1
- L2 – Special attack 2



MOTORHEAD

In order to access the playable track, hold down L1 + L2 while the demo begins. Now buckle in and prepare for the drive of your life!

CONTROLS

- ←, → – Steering
- ○ – Accelerate
- ✕ – Brake/Reverse
- □ – Handbrake
- △ – Horn
- R1 – Up gear
- R2 – Down gear
- L1 – Toggle camera
- L2 – Look back
- START – Pause
- SELECT – In game options

CHARTS AND PRICE WATCH

And finally... here's how things stand in the PlayStation market at the moment. It's our usual round up of the movers and shakers in the many and varied games charts. More importantly we tell you how much you can expect to pay for those top titles.

CHART TRACK	
1. FIFA '99	EA
2. CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED	Sony
3. TOMB RAIDER III	Eidos
4. BRIAN LARA CRICKET	Codemasters
5. GRAN TURISMO	Sony
6. SPYRO THE DRAGON	Sony
7. ABE'S EXODDUS	GT
8. TOCA 2	Codemasters
9. COLIN MCRAE RALLY	Codemasters
10. TENCHU	Activision

BLOCKBUSTER RENTAL	
1. FIFA '99	EA
2. CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED	Sony
3. BRIAN LARA CRICKET	Codemasters
4. TOMB RAIDER III	Eidos
5. GTA (PLAT.)	Take 2
6. TOCA 2	Codemasters
7. RESIDENT EVIL (PLAT.)	Virgin
8. MAX POWER RACING	Infogrames
9. TENCHU	Activision
10. KNOCKOUT KINGS	EA

INDEPENDENT	
1. CRASH BANDICOOT (PLAT.)	Sony
2. TOMB RAIDER (PLAT.)	Eidos
3. DIE HARD TRILOGY (PLAT.)	EA
4. CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED	Sony
5. KNOCKOUT KINGS	EA
6. BRIAN LARA CRICKET	Codemasters
7. TOCA 2	Codemasters
8. TIME CRISIS (PLAT.)	Sony
9. WILD ARMS	Sony
10. TRACK AND FIELD (PLAT.)	Konami

GAME	
1. MAX POWER RACING	Infogrames
2. FIFA '99	EA
3. TOMB RAIDER III	Eidos
4. BRIAN LARA CRICKET	Codemasters
5. GRAN TURISMO	Sony
6. TOCA 2	Codemasters
7. TENCHU	Activision
8. COLIN MCRAE RALLY	Codemasters
9. SPYRO THE DRAGON	Sony
10. PSX MEGAPACK	Acclaim

PRICE WATCH	INDEPENDENT	GAME	HMV	TOY 'R' US
FIFA '99 – EA	£39.99	£39.99	£40.00	£39.99
CRASH BANDICOOT 3 – Sony	£39.99	£39.99	£44.99	£39.99
TOMB RAIDER III – Eidos	£44.99	£39.99	£44.99	£39.99
BRIAN LARA CRICKET – Codemasters	£44.99	£44.99	£44.99	£34.99
GRAN TURISMO – Sony	£39.99	£39.99	£44.99	£39.99

CONSUMER WATCH

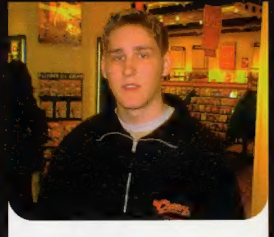
And once again a day vanishes as we tramp the streets in true hackneyed journo style, gauging your opinions about the world of gaming.

NAME: Tim Mayo
AGE: 21
OCCUPATION: Sales Assistant
YOUR PURCHASE: *TOCA*
BUYING NEXT: Something cheap!
MOST WANTED: *Gran Turismo 2*
BEST PSX TITLE YET: *Tomb Raider III*
WORST PSX TITLE: *Rayman*

NAME: Paul Wolley
AGE: 43
OCCUPATION: Accident Investigator
YOUR PURCHASE: *ISS Pro '98*
BUYING NEXT: *Colony Wars*
MOST WANTED: *RC Stunt Copter*
BEST PSX TITLE YET: *Cool Boarders 3*
WORST PSX TITLE: *Bust-A-Move 2*

NAME: Sam Hatton
AGE: 27
OCCUPATION: Video Editor
YOUR PURCHASE: *WipEout 2097*
BUYING NEXT: ??
MOST WANTED: *WipEout 3*
BEST PSX TITLE YET: *Kurushi*
WORST PSX TITLE: *Croc*

NAME: David O'Hara
AGE: 35
OCCUPATION: Lab Technician
YOUR PURCHASE: *TOCA 2*
BUYING NEXT: *Abe's Exoddus*
MOST WANTED: *Gran Turismo 2*
BEST PSX TITLE YET: *Abe's Oddysee*
WORST PSX TITLE: *Mr Domino*



NAME: Adam Bollett
AGE: 18
OCCUPATION: Student
YOUR PURCHASE: *Tenchu*
BUYING NEXT: *Brian Lara Cricket*
MOST WANTED: *FFV VIII*
BEST PSX TITLE YET: *Resident Evil 2*
WORST PSX TITLE: *Wild 9*

DISCLAIMER: PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL CHART PLACINGS AND PRICES FEATURED ON THIS PAGE WERE CORRECT AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS.

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AZURE DREAMS ... 29.99
B-MOVIE ... 33.99
BLOOD LINES ... 30.99
BOMBERMAN WORLD 83% ... 29.99
BREATH OF FIRE 3 86% ... 35.99
BRIAN LARA CRICKET ... 36.99
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